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FREE

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2011

Anti-bullying Effort Moves Forward

see p. 29

How Will You Be Treated?

You're gay or lesbian, bisexual, transgender. Talking honestly to a doctor about your health care needs has always been uncomfortable. Will he judge you? How do you discuss what's meaningful?

Addressing what many say are unmet needs, AIDS Community Alliance plans to roll out two new services in 2011 – primary health care services for the lgbt community and mental health counseling for the lgbt community.

Adding new services will not change ACA's HIV mission.

"We're staying 100% with our existing HIV services. No changes there. We are adding new services and evolving," said Phil Goropoulos, CEO of the multi-county agency. ACA currently provides HIV medical case management services to 665 individuals and families. The new services are in addition to HIV and include new types of services.

The organization's new name, Alder Health Services, reflects their planned evolution.

According to the Celtic tradition, the Alder tree is giving and nurturing. The tree is known for restoring poor soil to health and provides shelter against harsh conditions.

The Alder is also a trailblazer who is extremely focused, dislikes waste, and is motivated by action and results.

The "evolution" reflects a planning and research process completed by ACA's governing board. Throughout the last year, the board sought feedback from

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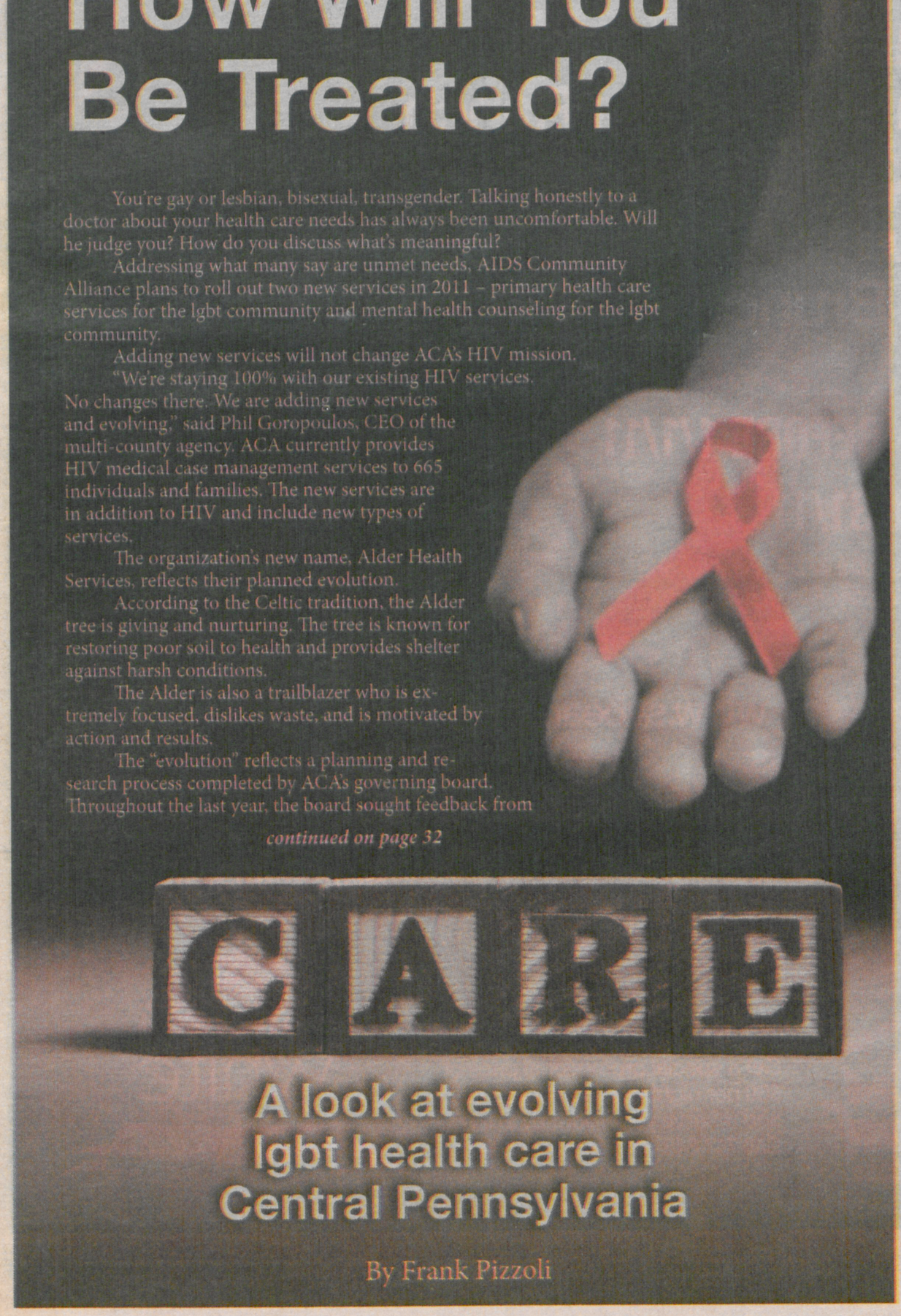

A look at evolving lgbt health care in Central Pennsylvania

By Frank Pizzoli

Building Alliances

New Community Center Exec Donna Rose Poised for Action

By Frank Pizzoli

Getting to know one another over coffee, Donna Rose snatched a hard tack candy from my fingers. She effortlessly made it disappear and then reappear. Recently named executive director of The LGBT Community Center Coalition, Rose is poised to make magic in the region.

Rose spoke to an enthusiastic FAB crowd last October, calling herself an "accidental activist," although she prefers the word "advocacy". The nationally known speaker and writer on lgbt inclusion and equality, was the first transgender person serving the Human Rights Campaign, the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, and the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. She's worked at the grass-roots level across the country to coordinate, communicate, and educate.

As she settles into the region, Rose is making the rounds with lots of "meet and greet" moments.

"I've certainly had to land on my feet. The last couple of months have been quite the whirlwind." she says. "Although I've been based out of Arizona over recent years I'm a northeasterner at heart so it's actually

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Lancaster County Commissioners Repeal Human Relations Ordinance

In a 2-1 vote Nov. 17, Lancaster County Board of Commissioners voted to abolish its 40-year-old countywide Human Relations Ordinance.

Calling the measure an effort at "cost containment," Commissioners Scott Martin and Dennis Stuckey approved abolishment. Commissioner Craig Lehman voted against closing down the operation. In a long, public dialogue that drew people to public meetings with signs and forged coalitions, commissioners' vote had been long awaited.

"While I know that the Lancaster County ordinance was not lgbt-specific, a civil right is a civil right," explained Equality Pennsylvania board president Brian Sims. "Any protection against discrimination is a benefit for everyone in a community. Today the commissioners claimed their actions were driven by a simple need to save money. Let's hope that argument isn't a precursor to what may happen in Harrisburg when the General Assembly starts wrestling with the budget challenges faced by the state come January 2011."

Protection against discrimination benefits everyone...

- Brian Sims, Equality PA

continued on page 15

MORE:

Making it better

see p. 22

BEARS, BIKERS & MAYHEM

The Nation's First Gay Leather, Bears & Biker Weekend!

FRIDAY, MARCH 4 — 9 PM
Bear Biker Bash at Club XS

SATURDAY, MARCH 5 — 8 PM
Mardi-Gras Mayhem at Altland's Ranch

SUNDAY, MARCH 6 — 11 AM
Bye Bye Bear Bingo Brunch at Club XS

$60 EARLY BEAR SPECIAL - BEFORE 1/1/11

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black white party
CELEBRATING 5 YEARS

LGBT Freedom Week in Region

By Bolton Winpenny

Each year there is a national effort to publicize the week prior to Valentine's Day as Freedom to Marry Week. Last year, Pennsylvania lgbt organizations and their allies coordinated hosting and publicizing events to raise awareness and education regarding the lgbt plight for equality in marriage.

For 2011, all events for the week-long endeavor are scheduled for in or around the week prior to Valentine's Day, Feb 7-14.

Freedom to Marry Week, and notably the efforts of Sen. Daylin Leach, sponsor of Pennsylvania's Marriage Equality bill, proved successful when Senate Bill 707, to define marriage in the Pennsylvania constitution as between "one man and one woman," failed 10 to 4 shortly after this series of events. Only two years prior, the same Senate committee passed a similar bill, 8 to 6.

Thirteen events made up Freedom to Marry week 2010, most notably: a press conference where Daylin introduced his bill; a lobby day during which 52 appointments were kept with senators and representatives, even after the winter's worst snowstorm; the Pennsylvania Diversity Network's (PDN) Photo Project of 400 same-sex couples presented in the Capitol Rotunda; 70,000 emails from citizens, generated through Keystone Progress, to senators and representatives; a debate between Sen. Daylin Leach and Maggie Gallagher, President of the LGBT oppressing National Organization for Marriage, hosted by HACC Allies; an interfaith celebration of thirteen clergy representing different faiths, hosted by The Interfaith Alliance of Pennsylvania (TIA-PA); a workshop on marriage equality, as part of the first Pennsylvania Progressive Summit; and rallies in Allentown and Harrisburg, hosted by PDN, MCC Lehigh Valley, and the Unitarian Universalist Pennsylvania Legislative Advocacy Network (UUPLAN). A network of 32 LGBT and supportive organizations were integral for these events to come together, utilizing their email lists and usual media outlets, including a front page article in this newspaper, to advertise to the greater community.

For 2011, Freedom to Marry Week has grown. This year, for Pennsylvania, the name has been changed to LGBT Freedom Week in order to focus on LGBT equality in general. The primary organizations involved agreed that the premise of Freedom to Marry week -spreading awareness and education regarding the lgbt plight for equality - holds the same basic reasoning as our struggle for all equality issues including non-discrimination, Don't Ask, Don't Tell, hate crime laws, and bullying. This all boils down to the first clause in the first sentence of the first amendment of the Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." However, Congress is respecting the establishment of Catholics, Evangelical Christians, Mormons, and other religions, while oppressing the free exercise of others. By changing the name to LGBT Freedom Week PA, Equality Pennsylvania and ACLU-PA, who focus their efforts on non-discrimination in general, rather than specifically marriage equality, along with other, similar organizations, have been added as supportive organizations.

Another indicator of growth this year was a coordinated networking effort with long hosting organizations. This includes William Way of Philadelphia, which hosts an annual interfaith breakfast; MCC Lehigh Valley, which has worked for years with Pennsylvania Diversity Network (PDN); and Keystone Alliance of the Johnstown/Altoona area, which continuously raises LGBT equality issues with legislators and hosts two annual drag shows to support equality.

New groups have been networked to host events, including Keystone Progress, The Delta Foundation of Pittsburgh, Equality Pennsylvania, The Rainbow Review (Reading and Lehigh Valley), Erie Gay News, OUT in the Silence, Rainbow Rose Community (Lancaster), and Lancaster LGBT Organizing Committee. All of these groups have initiated plans for their events. Details can be found at http://LGBTFreedomWeekPA.org. UUPLAN, which has been a leader in Freedom to Marry Week, PA for years, is taking extra steps this year by coordinating with their state-wide network of UUs.

From 32 last year, the list of involved organizations is up to 50, and still counting. Let's not forget all of the organizations that initiated and took part in this state wide effort last year. We're picking up where we left off, including events grown from what worked best: discussion panels, rallies, press conferences, lobbying, interfaith breakfasts, and more. On Monday, Feb. 7th, when Daylin re-introduces his Senate Bill for Marriage Equality, House Representative Mark B. Cohen will re-introduce his bill for Civil Unions. Rep. Dan Frankel, Sen. Pat Browne and allies are considering the best legislative strategy for their nondiscrimination bills.

So, check out http://LGBTFreedomWeekPA.org, and be sure to support one or more of the events occurring as part of LGBT Freedom Week PA this year.

Chamber Leader Russ Boggs Honored

At a networking evening Oct. 12 at the Mechanicsburg Arts Center, the board of directors of the Central Pa Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce surprised current president Russell A. Boggs with the first ever "Business Builder Champion Award". The engraved crystal award was presented by the chamber's vice president Debra McClain, of Wells Fargo.

McClain started off the presentation by describing Russ's drive and dedication to advance the mission of "creating community and building business" here in the region. The chamber has had over 100% growth in membership over the past three years.

"Russ has represented the lgbt community with professionalism by promoting inclusion in the pursuit of an ideal workplace, marketplace, industry and region," McClain said. Boggs volunteers approximately 40 hours of his personal time each week to advance the mission of the chamber. "He is committed to promoting and supporting workforce diversity," she noted.

Boggs attends monthly Dauphin County Diversity Forums, LGBT Center Coalition leadership seminar series, bi-monthly Harrisburg Regional Chamber Business Diversity Advisory Council, events hosted by nonprofits, and other diversity segments and government meetings. Boggs is a member of the Harrisburg Human Relations Commission; board member, Capital Area Stonewall Democrats; and president, Capital Area PA State Education Association-Retired.

Central Pa Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce president Russell A. Boggs, center, recently received the first ever "Business Builder Champion Award" from the chamber in recognition that the chamber has had over 100% growth in membership over the past three years.

Photo courtesy Posh Studio

Also in 2010, Boggs was nominated for the Harrisburg Regional Chamber's Diversity Award, one of three local nominees for this highly prestigious award. Boggs was publicly recognized by the human relations commission for this nomination on Dec. 1 at the Radisson Penn-Harris Hotel.

He was listed by the Central PA Business Journal as one of the twenty-five most influential minority leaders in the region over the past 25 years. He recently attended the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce 'Out for Business' Conference, Washington, DC.

Boggs has 35 years of leadership as an educator, Cumberland Valley Education Association, the NEA's Constitution, Bylaws and Rules Committee, and various professional development groups. He resides in the Harrisburg mid-town district and recently completed renovations of his town home using lgbt-owned contractors.

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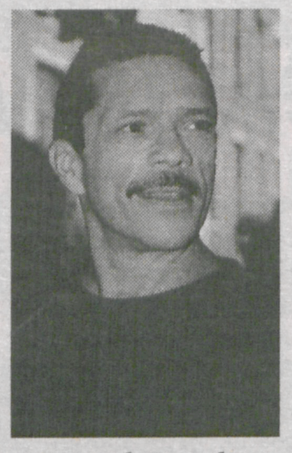
CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESB AN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

publisher's note

Are Adults AWOL on Bullying?



Frank Pizzoli

Slippery slopes are, well, slippery. Our world doesn't fit tidy explanations on too many things. Free speech regarding gay civil rights is one of those issues. The problem arises when the expression of free speech includes the curtailment of that same freedom for others.

Example. Students at St. Charles North High School near Chicago objected to the school's participation in Ally Week, a campaign to bring awareness to anti-gay bullying, by wearing "Straight Pride" t-shirts. That's free speech in action – one group calling attention to the bullying of gay students and one group celebrating straight pride.

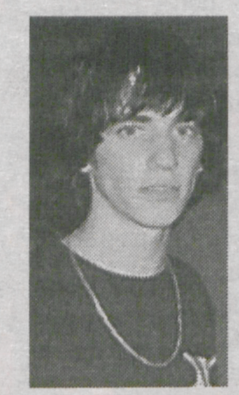
As the week progressed, three students wore t-shirts that featured Straight Pride on the front and a Bible verse that promotes violence against gay people on the back. "If a man lay with a male as those who lay with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination and shall surely be put to death," the Leviticus passage says. The students objected to the school's participation in Ally Week.

School officials asked the students to black out the Bible quote with permanent maker and they agreed. Consequently, they won't face disciplinary action for wearing anti-gay t-shirts to school. Two additional students wore Straight Pride t-shirts without the Bible quote the following day.

The school's way of handling the situation riled some in the community.

"The quote on the back of the shirts was pretty much a death threat towards all of the gay and lesbian people at St. Charles North," Michael Fairbanks, president of the Gay-Straight Alliance at neighboring St. Charles East, told the St. Charles Republican. "When people are being emotionally hurt and distracted from having a healthy and safe learning environment, the bullies should be persecuted and punished."

I do not want to minimize an expression of violence against anyone. These situations are no joke. Children should not be expected to attend school in a hostile environment and walk the halls reading quotes from any source that call for their being "put to death". But let's not forget this is a teaching moment in a learning environment. That's what schools do.



Christian Taylor

Enter Christian Taylor, a student at Grafton High School in Yorktown, Virginia who was bullied. He committed suicide. Like so many victims of bullying/victim induced suicide, Taylor's mother sought to have school officials intervene in a meaningful way and protect her son to no effect. Unlike the intervention at St. Charles North High School, school officials did nothing. Reports are that the principal bully in this sad story remains in school having faced zero consequences.

And here, readers, is where the rubber hits the road.

Are teachers responsible for keeping alert to bullying? What if a teacher agrees with the Bible quote? Then that teacher shouldn't date or marry the same sex. Perhaps that's the real First Amendment free speech issue here – sexuality is respected as determined by the individual. And therein lies the problem. There are, unfortunately, school administrators and teachers who think same-sex relations are simply wrong and they also think, therefore, erroneously, that they get to make that decision for everyone. "If it's wrong by my value system, it's wrong for everyone."

Well, no, it's not wrong for everyone. That makes about as much sense as making a gay person Leader for the Day and he, or she, declares that heterosexuality is wrong because, well, it's different from who they are and that's their moral code. Likewise, if an lgbt person thinks heterosexuality is wrong, they shouldn't be a heterosexual.

voice box

"On the baker's dozen of anti-gay activists caught being, uh, gay: "Troy King is the best. He wants to outlaw 'sex toys'. Can you imagine how long the list would be! I wonder how he knows one toy from another?"
Reader Joe

Troy King

Refers to Alabama Attorney General Troy King who was caught by his wife while having sex with a local Homecoming King from (can't make this up) Troy University. We hear the mascot did a dance.

Is Gen. Amos not aware that his troops have fought alongside military personnel from many of the 36 nations that allow gays and lesbians to openly serve? With no reports of negative effect on their combat effectiveness.
A Reader

General James Amos, newly appointed Marine Corps commandant, opposed to repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," said "There's risk involved. There is nothing more intimate than young men, laying out, sleeping alongside of one another and sharing death, fear and loss of brothers. I don't know what the effect of that will be on cohesion. I mean, that's what we're looking at. It's unit cohesion, it's combat effectiveness."

E-mail your thoughts to Central VOICE posops@aol.com

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Walking Around Money

Time for the pork-laden practice to end

By Lowman S. Henry

The skyrocketing cost of government was a major factor in the GOP's sweeping victories in congressional elections earlier this month. Much attention was focused on earmarks, the practice of legislators inserting favored projects into the budget without going through the normal appropriations process.

In reaction to the public outcry against earmarks, the U.S. Senate Republican Conference voted to ban the procedure. The vote is viewed as a victory for TEA party fiscal conservatism as well as a personal victory for Senator Jim DeMint who lead the anti-earmark charge and for the incoming class of conservatives, including Pennsylvania's Pat Toomey, who spoke out against earmarks.

National Republicans have heard the voters on pork barrel spending, but will their counterparts at the state level in Penn's Woods follow in their footsteps? Incoming Governor Tom Corbett campaigned against Walking Around Money or WAMS, which are the state-level version of earmarks. Candidate Corbett attacked WAMS as having "little to no accountability and oversight" and said spending on them has "spiraled out of control."

Governor Corbett will take office with his party in control of both houses of the General Assembly, and they hold historically large majorities. With opposition to WAMS a core part of many legislators' campaigns the GOP has no excuse when it comes to banning the practice.

Plus, the fact that WAMS still exist is a flagrant violation of the state constitution. A 1995 state Supreme Court ruling verified that the process is unconstitutional. But, defiant legislators simply renamed WAMS "legislative initiative grants" and continued the practice under the new moniker. That, however, doesn't make them any more constitutional. Tim Potts, founder and president of Democracy Rising PA explains: "They're unconstitutional because once the legislature appropriates money to an executive agency the legislature may not directly or indirectly determine what happens to those funds. That of course is the WAM process."

The process and even the amount of money spent by state lawmakers on WAMS is cloaked in secrecy. Estimates of how much is spent on WAMS range from $65.5 million reported by the Pennsylvania Independent web site, to the over $100 million per year claimed by State Representative Curt Schroder, an earmark opponent.

There is little bipartisan cooperation in Harrisburg, but feasting on pork has united Republicans and Democrats. According to the Associated Press, in recent years Senate Democrats have submitted $59 million in WAM requests and House Democrats $55 million. During the same time frame Senate Republicans asked for $50 million in pork barrel spending while House Republicans requested $45 million in funding.

Adding insult to injury is the fact that when it comes to allocating WAMS not all house and senate districts are created equal. Legislative leaders feast on bacon, while backbenchers settle for table scraps. The Harrisburg Patriot-News reported that the district represented by former House Speaker Bill DeWeese was number one in receiving WAM grants at $3 million per year for an average of $82.00 per person. The district of current speaker Keith McCall came in second at $50.00 per capita.

Not only are WAMS a perversion of the spending process, they also pollute the legislative process. Leaders use WAM grants to essentially blackmail members into voting the way they want on key legislation. Lawmakers who toe the leadership line are rewarded with WAM grants for their districts, while those who are independent - who represent their constituents rather than leadership - often fail to get their requests approved.

The degree to which WAMs are a sacred cow was evident in this year's budget process. With the state facing a massive budget deficit the Department of Community and Economic Development, which administers Legislative Initiative Grants, was given a 23% budget increase for an additional $52 million in spending.

For both symbolic and substantive reasons the incoming Republican majority must follow Governor-elect Corbett's lead, comply with the state constitution and finally put an end to WAMS. It is a crucial first step in the long road toward restoring integrity to and public confidence in Pennsylvania's badly tarnished legislature.

Lowman S. Henry is Chairman & CEO of the Lincoln Institute and host of the weekly Lincoln Radio Journal. His email address is lhenry@lincolninstitute.org.

A Blessing for Bullied Gay Youth

The Blessing: If you are an lgbt boy or girl, man or woman, who is being bullied, then this blessing is for you. Carry it with you. Keep it near you at all times. Let it shield you from all harm. Let it be a light through any darkness as you find your path to the dignity and respect you deserve as a child of God.

My Name is: _____

What ever others may try to call me, my Name is _____.

God knows me by My Name because God gave me life.

God calls me by My Name because God has a purpose for my life.

God remembers My Name because God loves me just as I am.

Therefore I will not be afraid.

I will not be intimidated.

I will not be denied my dignity.

I will not harm myself.

I will not be called by any other name than My Name.

My Name is _____.

And I am beautiful and precious in the eyes of the Lord.

The blessing was written by the Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, a bishop of the Episcopal Church.

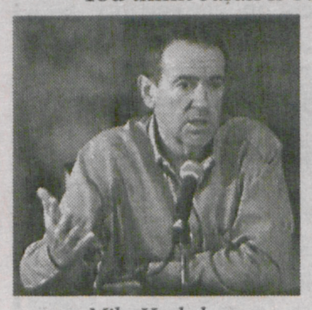
What Should We Worry About?

By David Mixner

Sarah Palin and more Sarah Palin is all you here about in the national media. The odds are if you turn on a television set somewhere you will find Sarah Palin. She is giving tours of Alaska, her daughter is on 'Dancing with the Stars', she is giving messages from God on Christian talk shows and always on the evening news. The reality is that her polling numbers are disastrous and her every move is watched which will lead to the inevitable misstep. Don't forget that most of her candidates lost in this past election and in fact most likely cost Republican United States Senate seats in Colorado, Nevada and Delaware.

While Sarah Palin is good fodder for any media outlet, she is not going to be the real problem for the LGBT community. My guess is that she will become so 'toxic' to established Republicans they will look for someone with her views but personable, calm and without the heat she generates. There is currently only person that meets that criteria and that is Mike Huckabee the former Governor of Arkansas. Don't forget he won primaries against Senator John McCain and is currently leading in a large number of individual state polls.

You think Sarah is bad on LGBT issues? Listen to where the former Governor comes down on our issues. After you read it, the feeling you are experiencing is the chill of fear running down your spine. Here is where the personal ex-governor, Fox news commentator and oh yes, Baptist minister stands on our issues:



Mike Huckabee

– he is 100% supportive of putting a ban on marriage equality in the United States Constitution

– he is 100% supportive of a ban on all LGBT adoptions and for LGBT folks to be foster parents.

– he supports 100% a ban on LGBT citizens in the military.

– he was against passage of the Hate Crimes legislation.

– he is opposed to the passage of ENDA

– he is absolutely opposed to civil unions

– he described LGBT relationships as having the "ick factor"

– he directly compared marriage equality and civil unions to drug users, incest, etc.

– says being pro-gay is being "pro-sodomy.

– has compared homosexuality to being like necrophilia

– believes civilization might fall if marriage equality takes place.

– he makes repeated personal appearances as a 'pastor' and Republican at some of the most extreme anti-LGBT groups in America.

– he eats all the time at Olive Garden in New York while doing Fox News. (had to lighten this all up!)

This man is a charmer like Reagan but he is more dangerous than Palin or Gingrich. We should not be diverted from this Good Ol' Boy simply because Sarah is showing us some grizzlies. She is a lightweight. Huckabee is the real bear.

AG Fired for Targeting Student

Michigan state Attorney General Mike Cox has fired controversial assistant attorney general Andrew Shirvell. As reported by Central Voice (Nov-Dec 2010), Michigan State Univ. Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong had been the target of Shirvell at a protest over presentation of "The Laramie Project".

Michigan State Univ. Student Assembly President Chris Armstrong (right). Photo by Chris Dzombak

Last September, Armstrong, University of Michigan's first openly gay student body president, sought a restraining order against Shrivell, who has been publicly accusing Armstrong of pushing "a radical homosexual agenda". Shrivell has shown up at student assembly events protesting Armstrong with signs that have a rainbow with a swastika drawn on it.

Michigan state Attorney General Mike Cox said Shirvell "repeatedly violated office policies, engaged in borderline stalking behavior and inappropriately used state resources."

Ex-Gays: "We're Rising and Will Prevail"

By Michael Petrelis
Central Voice San Francisco
Correspondent

An email from an anti-gay individual was sent recently to a number of gays, and a straight Congressman, making it seem as if Team Ex-Gay was beating Team Homo in the fourth quarter of the Super Bowl. I'm sharing the note because it made me laugh and you might also get a few chuckles out of it.

To: Ms. Gloria Nieto, Mr. Bevan Dufty, Mr. Michael Petrelis, Ms. Masen Davis, Mr. Rick Jacobs, Mr. Randy Allgaier, and Mr. Matthew S. Bajko

Cc: Rep. James E. Clyburn

Dear All:

You were mentioned in a recent Bay Area Reporter article on gay activists' opinion of Speaker Nancy Pelosi's performance regarding gay issues.

Please be advised of the following:

- Nancy Pelosi is a chronic liar and user.
- The ex-gay movement is rising and will prevail.
- Homosexuality and transgenderism are psychological disorders springing from early-life faulty bonding and identification with the same-sex parent. They indicate deep-seated gender self-alienation, and are preventable and treatable.
- More information (in contrast to the PC lies of the American Psychiatric Association and its Leftist-dominated sister organizations) is available through the National Assn. for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality (www.narth.com), the International Healing Foundation (www.gaytostraight.org), People Can Change (www.peoplecanchange.com), and Parents & Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays (www.pfox.org).
- Both parties have been using "gays" for forty years. Shame on them.
- You are not "sexual minorities." You are sick people. There is healing for you, if you get skilled help and stick with it for years. More time spent on "gay equality" is time wasted.
- The people have recourse to civil disobedience to all gay-egalitarian laws. Given the betrayal of the people by all three branches of the federal government, it may come to that.
- GayScam will be known as a sad chapter in American history. The truth will out.

Thank you,
Sharon Kass
Washington, D.C.

Ally in the Academy

What does it mean to be educated about LGBTQ issues? For that matter, what does it mean to be educated, period? What does it mean to have a good understanding of something, or to be enlightened?

Having been a college professor for a long time I certainly have thought a great deal about these questions. In this column I will be writing about education issues, especially the ideas and events which bear directly on those of us who believe in full equality for and affirmation of the LGBTQ community.

I suppose I am "straight," by the way, but let's begin with a look at this word. I consider myself straight only if you will let me define what that means. It's becoming necessary these days to accept labels only if one can define them, lest someone think they know what a person means when they say "I am a Christian, a Muslim, a progressive, a conservative, a patriot."

For some time now heterosexual people who affirm their non-heterosexual fellow human beings have been called allies. So what's wrong with "straight?"

Well, how about this. You may know about the Kinsey Scale or the Klein Sexual Orientation Grid, which address the fluidity of sexual orientation and expression. I'd like to propose a similar approach to straight people, because I find a long continuum there as well. There are people on one end of the scale who are so straight they can barely breathe, and those of us toward the other end want to be sure we disassociate ourselves from the, let's call them, 'Super straight." They epitomize the label "narrow minded."

I've learned over the years that when someone identifies as gay, that can mean a number of things. Becoming educated about LGBTQ issues includes learning that there is no such thing as "the gay community," any more than there is a "black community," or a "Hispanic community.

We are more accurate if we refer to LGBTQ communities, plural. There is such a wonderful variety of gay folks, straight folks, and so on, in our world. It's kind of like the phrase much loved by politicians when they refer to "the American people." How many times have you heard a politician use that term and wonder which American people he or she is referring to?

We all need to learn a great deal more about each other, even though we live in what has been called the information age and should know plenty already. We are surrounded by so many sources of information you might think we are all well educated about issues of social justice and equality, right? The civil rights movement educated the U.S.A. about what it means for a minority to be disenfranchised, so why are we still arguing about equal eights for LGBTQ people?

Well, there's education and then there's education. Ted Koppel said it so well: "We are these days drowning in information, very little of which is translated into knowledge, almost none of which evolves into wisdom."

Take the debate over same-sex marriage. I have learned through my class discussions of the issue that most of the students are not ready to approach it with any understanding. They simply don't know enough about human sexuality, gender, religion and the social construction of reality to talk about it intelligently. They need more education about those issues before they tackle marriage - gay or straight.

Koppel mentioned wisdom, another of my favorite things to discuss. As a young man I wanted so much to become wise, because I relied heavily on the wisdom I saw in my professors and other role models who had lived much longer than I.

Wisdom deserves more attention, so let's save it for another day; for the moment, let me say that I must be attaining some after all these years, for I now see clearly just how much I don't know about how the world works. Thank goodness education is a lifelong process, because I need some more.

Trum Simmons is senior professor of English at Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) and adviser of The Fourth Estate, the Harrisburg campus student newspaper. He also advises HACC Allies, the LGBTQA student organization.

Lancaster events

3rd Annual Winter Exposition
Runs until 1/22/2011
Annex 24 Gallery
Lancaster, PA

Sing for Hope:
A Winter Opera Gala
1/22/2011
Fulton Theater
Lancaster, PA

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State Legislators Scored by Green Groups

Sierra Club and Clean Water Action released today a new scorecard for all current Pennsylvania state legislators for their support for environmental laws and regulations over the past two years. State House members and State Senators were scored based on floor votes in the legislature, or other official actions taken by legislators on environmental matters.

"The Environmental Scorecard is a way to see what a state legislators' actual record has been over the past two years. Voters who care about the environment should hold their elected officials accountable," stated Jeff Schmidt, Pennsylvania Chapter Director for the Sierra Club.

The two groups noted that there were large differences between legislators who have a history of supporting environmental positions and those who are clearly opposed. Myron Arnowitt, PA State Director for Clean Water Action stated, "It is striking that the House Environmental Resources Committee Chair, Rep. George (D-Clearfield) had one of the highest scores at 92%, while the senior Republican on the House Environmental Resources Committee, Rep. Scott Hutchinson (R-Venango) had one of the lowest scores at 13%. This stark difference shows how the outcome of the State House elections could have a big impact on the environment."

Key votes in the Scorecard include votes on the severance tax on natural gas extraction, a moratorium on further gas leasing in state forests, clean energy policy, and state funding for environmental programs. For the first time, legislators received extra points for some non-voting actions, including co-sponsorship of key bills, or by officially supporting or opposing key clean water regulations enacted this year. As a result, a few legislators received scores over 100%.

Sierra Club and Clean Water Action dubbed 13 State House members and 10 State Senators as "Environmental Heroes" for scoring 100% or higher on the Scorecard. These legislators are:

Rep. Bradford (D) 105%, Briggs (D) 115%, Freeman (D) 106%, Harper (R) 101%, Hornaman (D) 106%, Houghton (D) 106%, Lentz (D) 104%, McIlvaine Smith (D) 106%, Melio (D) 106%, Murphy (D) 105%, Santarsiero (D) 106%, Santoni (D) 101%, Wagner (D) 101%.

Sen. Dinniman (D) 110%, Farnese (D) 115%, Ferlo (D) 115%, Fontana (D) 105%, Hughes (D) 105%, Kasunic (D) 105%, Leach (D) 115%, Tartaglione (D) 103%, Washington (D) 105%.

In the House the highest scoring Republican was Rep. Kate Harper (R) with 101%. High scoring Republicans in the Senate were Sen. Lisa Baker (R) and Sen. Charles McIlhinney (R) both with 90%.

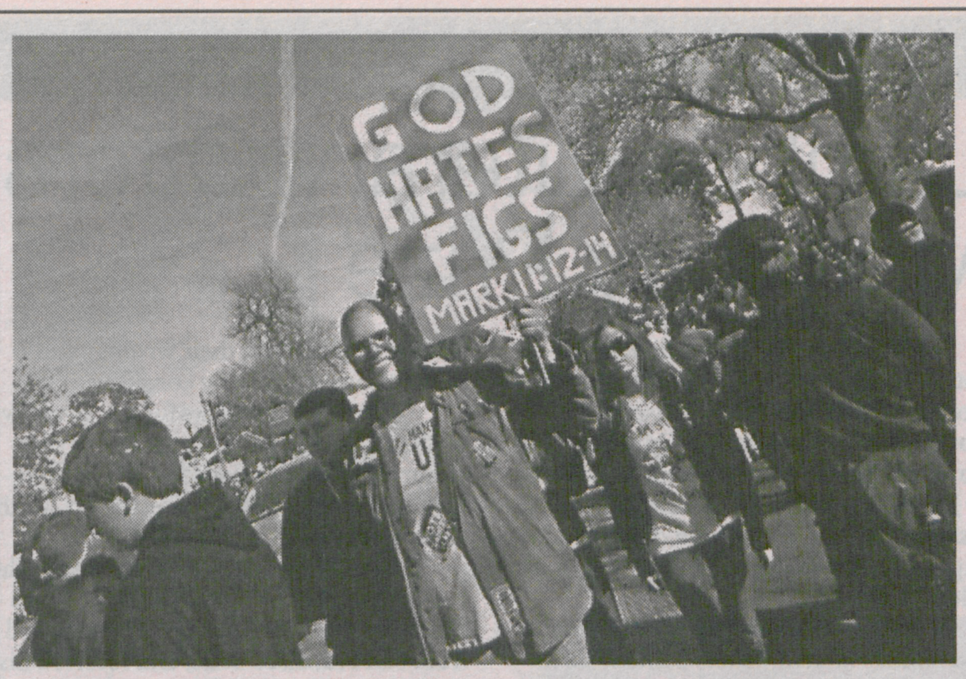
The lowest scores on the House side were fifteen members who scored under 25%. These were: Rep. Brooks (R) 22%, Rep. Causer (R) 13%, Cox (R) 18%, Ellis (R) 22%, Gabler (R) 22%, Hutchinson (R) 13%, Kieger (R) 18%, Knowles (R) 20% Metcalfe (R) 18%, Perry (R) 24%, Pyle (R) 22%, Rapp (R) 13%, Roae (R) 13%, Stevenson (R) 13%, Turzai (R) 22%.

The lowest scores on the Senate side were a group of six Senators who all scored 50%. These were: Sen. Earll (R), Folmer (R), Orie (R), Robbins (R), White, Mary Jo (R), White, Donald (R).

Sierra Club is national environmental organization that was founded in 1892. It has 10 local Groups in Pennsylvania, representing over 24,000 members. The Sierra Club works to protect and restore the natural and human environment through education and advocacy.

Clean Water Action is a national, member supported, environmental organization working to protect our waters, build healthy communities, and make democracy work for all of us. Operating in Pennsylvania for 25 years, Clean Water Action has over 100,000 members in the state.

The Environmental Scorecard is available for download at http://www.cleanwateraction.org/pa



Wow, imagine that: God Hates Figs, according to Mark 11:12-14. And this whole time Rev. Phelps and family thought he hated fags. Or did Apostle Mark hear what was said incorrectly? And then write it down that way? Now I know fags who do like figs…

Equality Coalition Harrisburg "Town Hall Meeting" Jan. 12

A coalition of advocacy groups working toward equality for the lgbt community is hosting a series of public events, or town hall meetings, to discuss the status and future of lgbt rights. The series, which began late last year, includes six events in cities across the state. The cities included are Wilkes Barre, Philadelphia, Harrisburg (Jan. 12), Pittsburgh, and Erie. The town hall meetings are open to the public. Info: Equality Pennsylvania, 215-731-1447, jdungee@equalitypa.org.

York events

"Fast from the Past: The Racing Motorcycles of Yesteryear"
Runs until 5/1/2010
Antique Auto Museum at Hershey
161 Museum Dr., Hershey
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Lambda Literary Offers Monetary Prize

Lambda Literary Foundation announced it is the new home of the largest monetary prize awarded exclusively to an lgbt writer: The Outstanding Mid-Career Novelists' Prize. The award, made possible by James Duggins, PhD, consists of two cash awards of five thousand dollars and is unprecedented in its category as well as its value.

Previously presented at the Saints and Sinners annual writers conference in New Orleans, The Outstanding Mid-Career Novelists' Prize will now be featured at the annual Lambda Literary Awards beginning in 2011. It will be awarded in perpetuity under the auspices of Duggins's donor-advised fund at Horizons Foundation.

Lambda Literary's board is in the process of forming a panel of grant advisors to choose candidates according to the following criteria established by Duggins:

The award will be presented to one self-identified man and one self-identified woman, and age will not be a factor in defining mid-career.

The award will recognize emergent lgbt authors who have written and published at least three novels or two novels and a substantial additional literary work such as poetry, short stories, essays.

The authors will be of demonstrated ability and show promise for growth.

Candidates' contributions to the lgbt literary field beyond their writings and publications will also be considered.

The Grant Advisors for the award will be distinguished members of the writing community with knowledge of lgbt literature, and will recommend recipients for the awards for approval from the board.

Duggins, a US Navy Journalist in the Pacific (Korean War), studied with James Michener and Bill Lederer. He graduated from San Francisco State, and received his PhD from UC Berkeley. He taught English and Speech at high school and community college, and retired as a professor from San Francisco State. He is co-author of Hooked on Books (Berkley Books), compiled Teaching Reading for Human Values (Charles Merrill), and has written many articles for academic journals (The English Journal, The Journal of Reading, Wilson Library Journal,); his memoir "A Rock and a Hard Place" appeared in Love, Castro Street: Reflections of San Francisco (Alyson Press, 2007). He now writes fiction full time and his love of history has produced the historical novels The Power: A Novel of Voodoo, the forthcoming sequel, Slave Stealer, and he is at work on two more. He divides his time between the desert in southern California and his house in Mexico where he collects Mexican Folk Art and is a regular contributor to museums around the United States.

Guest Speakers at Metropolitan Community Church

Transexual health issues were discussed at Harrisburg's Metropolitan Community Church in a program sponsored by AIDS Community Alliance, now known as Alder Health Services. Donna Rose, newly appointed executive director, LGBT Community Center Coalition, and Mul Kyul Kim, Policy Health Counsel for the National Center for Transgender Equality, Washington, D.C., spoke to 26 attendees. Alder Health had previously sponsored community health forums on lgbt and lesbian health with a men's program planned for early 2011. All HIV-related services under ACA will continue under Alder health with plans for adding lgbt health and mental health services in 2011.

New Jersey Legislators Vote to Strengthen Anti-Bullying Law

New Jersey legislators recently voted to strengthen the state's anti-bullying law. The bill passed 30-0 in the Senate and 71-1 in the Assembly. The bill is one of 10 state anti-bullying laws protecting students from bullying and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

The comprehensive anti-bullying law strengthens the existing law by:

Requiring training for educators on bullying prevention.

Requiring school districts to have anti-bullying programs.

Providing the Department of Education with the tools they need to help districts combat bullying.

Clarifying investigation procedures and mandating investigation by school staff.

Requiring educators to report all bullying they learn about, on or off school grounds.

Requiring enhanced reporting to the public about how schools and districts are handling bullying and harassment.

The nine other states with anti-bullying laws that enumerate characteristics of students most often targeted and specifically mention sexual orientation and gender identity or expression are California, Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Vermont and Washington.

Anti-lgbt bullying is a pervasive form of bullying. Nearly nine out of 10 lgbt students (84.6%) said they'd been harassed in school in the past year because of their sexual orientation and two-thirds (63.7%) because of their gender expression, according to a 2009 National School Climate Survey. Nearly one in three lgbt students (30%) said they'd missed a day of school in the past month because of safety concerns.

What Foreign Military Says about DADT

In a 30-second ad refused by FOX News, generals from allied militaries say that gay troops do not undermine combat effectiveness. Host Bill O'Reilly and guest contributor Liz Cheney have expressed support for open gay service.

The ad includes video clips made in May 2010 featuring Major General Walter Semianiw, Chief of Military Personnel in the Canadian Forces, and Major General Simon Willis (retired), former Head of Defence Personnel in the Australian Defence Force. Major General Semianiw has since been promoted to Lieutenant General and leads Canada Command.

In the ad, both generals discuss the military impact of allowing gays and lesbians to serve openly, stating the following:

Major General Semianiw: "There is no negative impact of having men and women of any sexual orientation fighting together, be it in Afghanistan, be it in Iraq."

Major General Simon VL Willis (ret): "The lifting of the homosexual ban was a bit like Y2K. It was a non-event, and it continues to be a non-event."

According to Central Command's International Security Assistance Force (ISAT) fact sheet, there are more than 1,400 Australian troops and 2,800 Canadian forces fighting alongside U.S. troops in Afghanistan.

See ad: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0qAAtLQ8zw

Find out how your business can reach central PA's smart, successful gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community.

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stevek@pressandjournal.com

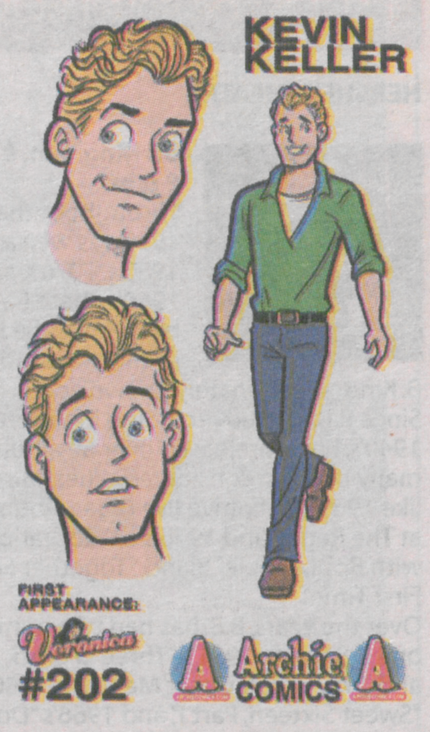
Chamber Attends National Event

Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce President Russell Boggs and Board of Directors Secretary Deborah Gable were in the nation's capital recently for the 2010 National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce Annual Out for Business Conference. They attended meetings of the Council on Chambers and Business Organizations (CCBO) to share ideas and initiatives with lgbt chamber leaders from across the US.

On Wednesday, prior to the conference, Boggs and Gable attended a special White House Economic Briefing for lgbt business leaders and on Friday evening, they attended the National Dinner at the National Building Museum.

"A strong take-away message is that business is the force that will move inclusion and diversity work forward, regardless of the political environment. Successful business leaders know that in order to remain competitive, their workplaces must value every person based on their skills and knowledge", Gable said.

Archie Comics Introduces Gay Character



Archie Comics, home of the famous Riverdale High students Archie, Betty, Veronica, Reggie and Jughead, welcomes a new classmate this fall. Kevin Keller, Archie Comics' first openly gay character, will be welcomed into the town of Riverdale.

"The introduction of Kevin is just about keeping the world of Archie Comics current and inclusive. Archie's hometown of Riverdale has always been a safe world for everyone. It just makes sense to have an openly gay character in Archie comic books," stated Archie Comics Co-CEO, Jon Goldwater.

VERONICA #202 features the full-issue story, "Isn't it Bromantic?" that introduces Kevin, Archie Comics' first openly gay character. Kevin Keller is the new hunk in town and Veronica just has to have him. After Kevin defeats Jughead in a burger eating contest at Pop's Chocklit Shoppe, she desperately latches onto him. Mayhem and hilarity ensue as Kevin desperately attempts to let Veronica down easy and her flirtations only become increasingly persistent.

In addition to the new ongoing achievements at Archie Comics--the #4 iPad book app and most downloaded comics on iTunes, the launch of Stan Lee Comics, Archie's Red Circle superheroes at DC, and exciting new partnerships with Abrams, Dark Horse and IDW--the introduction of Kevin as an openly gay character is part of the commitment to keep Archie properties reflective of the current world of teens and teen media.

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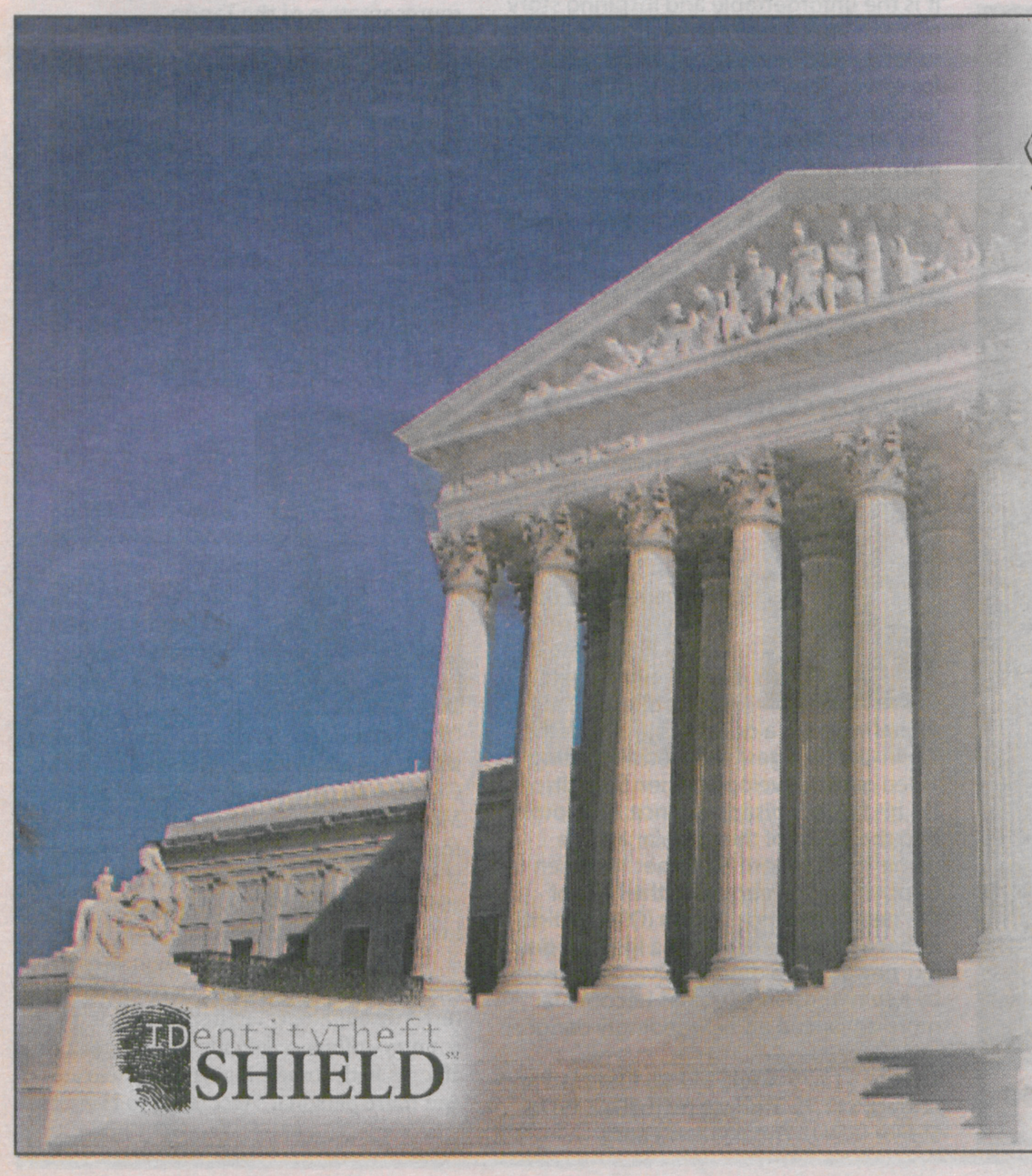
The 2nd Annual DINE-IN is seeking individuals or businesses interested in hosting a DINE-IN from January 1, 2011 thru April 30, 2011
Contact The Pride Committee: 717.801.1820 or info@prideofcentralpa.org



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AIDS Community Alliance of South Central PA is evolving to meet the needs of South Central Pennsylvania.

Alder Health Services

Our Health, Our Community

Over the next year, Alder Health Services will introduce a new blend of programming focused on meeting the unique health needs of the LGBT community of South Central Pennsylvania.

- Counseling Services – starting in January 2011
- Free STD Screenings and Treatment
- Primary Care Services – starting in the summer of 2011

For more information or to volunteer with Alder Health Services, please visit www.ALDERHEALTH.org or call 1.800.867.1550.

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BB King, Jan. 8
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Throughout the 1990's as well as the 1980's, 1970's, and 1960's, there has been only one King of the blues - Riley B. King, affectionately known as B.B. King. Since B.B. started recording in the late 1940's, he has released over 50 albums many of them considered blues classics, like 1965's definitive live blues album "Live at The Regal", and 1976's collaboration with Bobby "Blue" Bland, "Together For The First Time".
Over the years, B.B. has had two number one R & B hits, 1951's "Three O'Clock Blues", and 1952's "You Upset Me Baby', 1960's "Sweet Sixteen, Part I", and 1966's "Don't Answer the Door, Part I". B.B.'s most popular crossover hit, 1970's "The Thrill is Gone" went to #15 pop.
Tickets: $59.00, $49.00, $39.00
717-534-3405
1-800-745-3000
HersheyTheatre.com.

The Color Purple
Feb. 25, 8 p.m
Feb. 26, 2 & 8 p.m.
The Color Purple is a soul-stirring musical based on the classic Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Alice Walker and the moving film by Steven Spielberg. It is the unforgettable and inspiring story of a woman named Celie, who finds her unique voice in the world. Nominated for eleven Tony® Awards, the show is a landmark theatrical event, a celebration of love, and a Broadway phenomenon. With a joyous GRAMMY®-nominated score featuring jazz, gospel and blues, the show captures the hearts of young and old, and uniting audiences in a community of joy.
Tickets: $65.00, $55.00, $45.00, and $25.00
717-534-3405
1-800-745-3000
HersheyTheatre.com.

WHITAKER CENTER

IMAX Theatre
TRON: Legacy An IMAX 3D Experience
Jan.4-9 & Feb. 3-9
An intense, high-tech 3D adventure. In this visually-stunning science fiction movie, Sam Flynn (Garrett Hedlund) enters a digital world in a quest to save his father, Kevin (Jeff Bridges), the world's leading video game developer. When Sam discovers his father's disappearance, he is pulled into the world of the popular arcade game TRON, where his father has been trapped for 25 years. With the help of the fearless warrior Quorra (Olivia Wilde), father and son embark on a life-and-death journey across a digital universe – created by Kevin himself – that has become far more advanced and exceedingly dangerous.
Tickets: $13.75 Adult, $11.75 Child (12 and under), $11.75 Student (with ID), $11.75 Senior (55+), Whitakercenter.org

STRAND-CAPITOL

An Acoustic Evening with Lyle Lovett & John Hiatt
Jan. 26, 8 p.m.
Two songwriting giants on stage together, Lyle Lovett and John Hiatt, have teamed together for a new show in which both artists – who have been touring together in one fashion or another since 1989 – will perform side-by-side, alternating songs from throughout their careers.
One of the most distinctive songwriters to come out of Nashville, four-time Grammy Award-winner Lyle Lovett is equally comfortable in pop, rock, blues and country. Eleven-time Grammy nominee John Hiatt melds rock, acoustic, folk, new wave and Mississippi Delta blues into songs recorded by some three-dozen artists over the last three decades, from Three Dog Night to Eric Clapton. This not-to-be-missed evening of stories and songs will feature memorable performances of country, rock, folk, blues and more. Tickets: $47, $49, $62

Tango Buenos Aires
Feb. 17, 7:30 p.m.
Tango Buenos Aires has become one of Argentina's great cultural exports, known throughout the Americas, Europe and the Far East as the most authentic and uncompromising representative of the Tango.
Tango Buenos Aires was created for the Jazmines festival at the famous Buenos Aires cabaret Michelangelo by renowned composer and tango director Osvaldo Requena. The company met with tremendous success and was immediately added to the season of the General San Martin Municipal Theatre. Tickets: $28, $34, $37

Caroline Herring at Whitaker Jan. 21

From her 2001 debut album Twilight, which earned the XLent AMP award as one of the Top 5 Albums of 2001; to the highly praised Lantana (2008), recognized by the Austin Chronicle as, "the best modern Southern Gothic album since Lucinda Williams' Sweet Old World," Caroline Herring credits her southern Mississippi upbringing as her core musical inspiration. Herring's music continuously is hailed for uniting traditional sounds with striking, original observations about life, love, and the world around us.

On her most recent album, Golden Apples of the Sun (2009), Herring ventured through new territory, replacing the country-influenced sound of her previous albums with something simpler, delicate and more personal. According to Herring,

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Transgender Day of Remembrance

Nov. 20, people gather on the steps of the State Capital to observe Transgender Day of Remembrance, memorializing those who were killed due to anti-transgender hatred. "Day of Remembrance raises public awareness of hate crimes against transgender people, an action that current media doesn't perform," said Donna Rose inn her email invitation.

The candlelight vigil was sponsored by TransCentral PA, Equality PA and affiliated Student Network Across Pennsylvania (SNAP), Harrisburg MCC of the Spirit, Silent Witness, PCAR, PACADV, and the LGBT Community Center Coalition.

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NARTH Protestors

When NARTH (National Association for Research & Therapy of Homosexuality) held their annual convention at Renaissance Hotel near the Phila. International Airport Nov 6, protestors led by Truth Wins Out carried little pink suitcases symbolizing anti-gay activist George Rekers. Founder of Family Research Council, former NARTH board member, expert witness in favor of gay adoption bans in Arkansas and Florida, author of several anti-gay books, including, "Shaping Your Child's Sexual Identity" and "Growing Up Straight: What Every Family Should Know About Homosexuality," Rekers took a male escort that he met on Rentboy.com to Europe, according to Miami New Times reporters Penn Bullock and Brandon K. Thorp. According to the escort, Rekers "likes younger guys to hang out with." At first, Rekers said he only hired the young man to "lift his luggage". Later, he changed his story claiming he was only trying to convert sinners to Christianity.

Photos courtesy Philadelphia Gay News
by Scott A. Drake

Founded in 1992, NARTH claims to be secular, a claim opponents challenge by citing these media reports:

1. "We, as citizens, need to articulate God's intent for human sexuality,"
Dr. Joseph Nicolosi, former President of NARTH, said in CNN' 360 Degrees with Anderson Cooper, April 14, 2007.

2. "Our God-given integrity and our human dignity, there is no space for sex with a guy."
Official NARTH statement

3. Confronted with protesters at their 2006 national conference, NARTH instructed its members to "sing a hymn or pray instead,"
according to Mother Jones magazine, in its Sept.-Oct. 2007 issue.

Local Filmmaker Honored

Local amateur filmmaker Hollis Taylor, of Harrisburg city's Allison Hill neighborhood, recently received the first annual Ever Green Short Film Award at that organization's Sustainable Film Festival.

Presented by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club, Taylor received her award from Robin Mann, National Sierra Club president. Mann said, "Hollis was able to encapsulate the importance of organically and locally grown foods but more importantly the value of a community working together."

The film captures the ingenuity and passion behind an organic, urban community supported agriculture project known as Joshua Farm, located in Harrisburg's Allison Hill neighborhood.

The film features interviews with the people of Joshua Farm.

Hollis thanked her mentor, Kirsten Reinford, the local project's founder and operator.

Hollis Taylor (left), Harrisburg receives 2010 Ever Green Short Film Award, presented by Robin Mann, National Sierra Club president.

Sexual Minority Youth More Likely to Smoke

A report, "Coming Out about Smoking: Tobacco Use in the LGBTQ Young Adult Community" released by the National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC) explores the reasons why sexual minority youth smoke and suggests strategies for prevention.

The report finds that sexual minority youth are likely to smoke due to unique stressors such as discrimination and lack of family acceptance; that many sexual minority youth see smoking as an important social activity; that most sexual minority youth prefer to date nonsmokers; and that sexual minority youth smokers tend not to smoke heavily, with many wanting to quit. In order to reduce smoking rates, the report recommends intervention programs designed by youth and for youth, early outreach to youth smokers, and emphasis on the health risks of smoking.

The report uses information from focus groups and a survey of nearly 1,000 sexual minority youth. The survey was written to address the gaps in research on tobacco use in the lgbtq community.

"Current data suggest that sexual minority youth are more likely to smoke than the general youth population, but this report examines why. There is plenty of opportunity for intervention; we need to encourage tobacco prevention programs designed and driven by and for youth, which both emphasize the health risks of smoking and relate to the major stressors sexual minority youth face each day," said Gregory Varnum, NYAC executive director.

The National Youth Advocacy Coalition (NYAC) is a national social justice organization working with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning young people to strengthen the role of young people in the lgbtq rights movement.

Info: www.nyacyouth.org

Caroline Herring

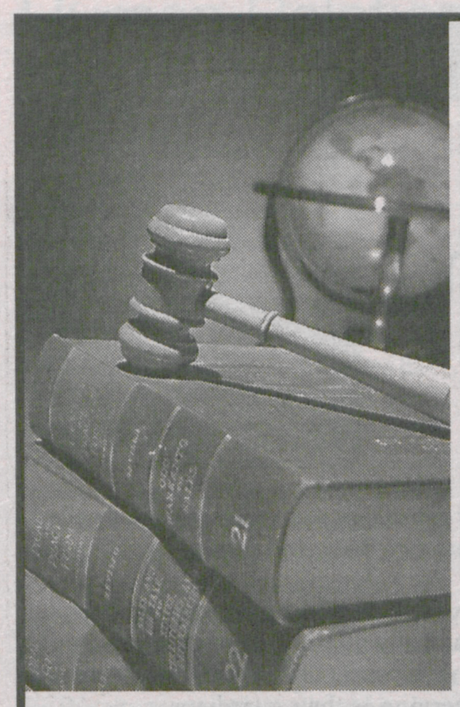
cond't from page 10

Golden Apples was mainly inspired by the iconic female folk singers and songwriters of the '60s and '70s.

"There's no getting rid of my accent," she explains, "but other than that, this is not a twangy record. It's not roots-based." Traveling to record in Pomfret, Connecticut, rather than her usual Austin, Texas has allowed critics to agree on this new experimental album. Herring's smooth compelling voice, compiled with her intricate acoustic finger picking, still leaves a quietly stunned audience.

The artist's remarkable skill begins with the album's first track, Tales of the Islander, which takes listeners on a journey, connecting with nature. "On this record," she observes, "I did none of the things that I've become comfortable with. I made it in a totally different part of the country, with a different kind of producer, and deliberately made it sparser. Still, I think it sounds like me."

Details: Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m., Stage Two. Tickets $19.50.



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HIV+ and Sexually Active?

Sexuality does not have to end with an HIV diagnosis. AIDS Community Alliance, a project of Alder Health Services, offers supportive educational programs to address the needs of men and women living with HIV.

- **Healthy Relationships**
  A five-part workshop that provides the tools to decrease the stress around disclosure to family, friends and sex partners.
- **Living Well Seminars**
  Interactive discussion groups on topics such as:
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  - *Viral Load & Risk Reduction*
  - *Positive/Negative Relationships*
- **Individual and Couples Consultations**
  One-on-one sessions to get the answers you want regarding HIV, sex and risk-reduction.
- **HIV Testing for Partners**

AIDS Community Alliance of South Central PA

AIDS Community Alliance is a project of Alder Health Services. All services are free and confidential. For more information about the program that is right for you, please call 1.800.867.1550.

www.ALDERHEALTH.org

coming out column

Queeries: Kids, Dating, and Second Dates

BY STEVEN PETROW

"Teaching Kids of Gay Parents"

Q: I teach fifth grade, and every fall we study genealogy and create what are called "family trees." I have a new student this year who has two dads, and I think he's adopted. How do I handle this topic appropriately in class?

A: First of all, kudos to you for being sensitive to this subject—the family tree project can be a tough one for adopted children – actually for anyone whose roots don't match the classic format, whether that means kids with two LGBT parents; single parents of any kind; or grandparents and any other adults serving as their guardians.

The wisest approach is to discuss the lesson with the child's parents in advance so you can develop a plan as partners. In fact, don't be surprised if the dads approach you directly about how the larger topic of how their sexuality may affect their child at school. No doubt, they're worried about potential name-calling or bullying. As for the family tree lesson, this topic has likely come up for them already, so they may have some good ideas on how to handle it smoothly. Let the parents know that you respect their family structure and want to honor it in a way that instills pride in their child—which is, after all, the whole point of the lesson.

Finally, when it comes time to start the project, do your best to explain to the entire class that families come in all different shapes and sizes, even presenting some varied examples that include gay families and others. And then see where your new student takes the exercise himself, with your guidance if necessary.

"How does my daughter know she's gay?"

Q: Last week my 17 year-old daughter told me that she's gay and has a girlfriend. I think she's really too young to fully understand her sexuality and want to ask her whether this lesbian relationship is really just a phase. Is that okay?

A: Not really. This question is usually posed as a means to deny or object to someone's true sexual orientation, and it can be perceived as either uninformed or at worst hostile. Even those who may "questioning" their own identity or experimenting have a right to decide whether they want to embrace some particular term or identity (and I'm not suggesting that's the case for your daughter). When someone comes out to you – especially a child of yours -- keep in mind that she has given this matter much thought and has also put great trust in you. It's not likely to be a "phase," just as your own sexuality, when it first came into bloom, probably was not. And you probably knew at 17 that you were straight, right?

"My friends want to set me up with every gay guy they know"

Q: I moved east about six months ago as a single guy. While I do happen to be looking for a boyfriend, I find it very annoying that every straight person I've met knows one gay man to set me up with. You know the drill – the gay neighbor, the gay hairdresser, the gay mechanic, the gay lawyer. I certainly appreciate all the good intentions, but how do I explain that just because I am gay doesn't mean I want to be matched up with every gay man they know?

A: Hey, be thankful that you have so many friends who care enough to try and set you up. And while another man's sexual orientation is not enough to make him the match of the century, it's also true that meeting someone through a friend gives you a leg up over a chance encounter online or at a club. Definitely don't be snarky with your matchmaker friends. Instead of giving them the "just because I'm gay" line, ask questions about the guy: How old? What line of work? Truly single? Funny? Smart? Red-headed? Why do you think we might be interested in each other? Don't make it into an inquisition, but find out a little about the potential date—besides the fact that he's gay. If you like what you hear, ask for an introduction -- on email, through a social media site – or let your friend know it's okay to give out your phone number. And even if you don't end up going out with a particular fellow, thank your friend for trying to help you out. And keep trying.

"Looking for a second date but don't want to beg"

Q: I had a wonderful evening earlier in the week with this woman I met in the neighborhood wine store. The sex was great, too. I called her a couple of days later and haven't heard back. How many times can I call back before I look like a loser?

A: Give it one more shot. She may have lost your number, been out of town, or otherwise been distracted. If she still doesn't respond after a second attempt, it's much more likely that was a one-night stand and she's not interested in a second outing.

Steven Petrow is a past president of the National Lesbian & Gay Journalists Association and writes for the Huffington Post and The Advocate. He's also the author of "The Essential Book of Gay Manners & Etiquette."

Queen of the Night

Kelis opens up about her new dance disc, being a born-again Christian and gay dudes on the downlow

BY CHRIS AZZOPARDI

Kelis doesn't take crap from anyone. Not from closet cases. Not from PETA, which she chewed out recently after they got on her case for wearing fur.

That so much about her – two Grammy nominations, the divorce, the arrest – is at our fingertips makes the recording chameleon feel less like a stranger and more like a friend.

And, when it comes to the gay community, you could call her that. She's performed on the Pride circuit, and her new album – the thumping electro-dance disc _Flesh Tone_, which she's supporting on the "All Hearts" tour with Swedish pop sensation Robyn – is quite possibly the gayest thing she's done since her breakout hit "Milkshake."

Kelis spoke about the inspiration behind her latest CD, believing in "live and let live" when it comes to her gay fans, and why she thinks people shouldn't lie about which way they swing.

For this album, you wanted to make something that reflected the music you were into at the time. What specifically were you listening to?

I wasn't really listening to a lot of electro and dance; it was more so the fact that I travel a lot and everywhere I went I just felt like – it wasn't even so much the music as it was the essence behind it that resonated for me. And so that is what propelled me in the direction I ended up going in.

The gay community was all over you before, and now you've gone and done an all-dance record. Were you considering your gay following while making this album?

The one thing that's pretty consistent is the fact that I've always had a really great gay community following. It's never faltered or wavered. I've had a really great support system. I don't really have to cater to anybody. I just sort of do me – and everyone, at least people who already love me, continues to love on.

Allegedly you have a lot of gay friends from what I've read. More than Lady Gaga?

(Laughs) I don't know anything about her, sorry. I have no idea.

You grew up singing in church choirs. If your church knew you were talking to a gay publication right now what would they think?

I don't know if that's really a clear question.

Some churches obviously aren't very accepting of gay people, so I'm wondering if that was a conflict for you.

Kelis

My honest answer: I'm a born-again Christian, so for me my personal beliefs are my beliefs. You have to live and let live.

So you're cool with gay people then, because some born-again Christians aren't?

I hate them! (Laughs) No, I mean, honestly, at the end of the day I have no heaven or hell for anyone. And my personal beliefs are my personal beliefs. I share them with my friends and the people that are close to me, so I generally believe in live and let live. And that goes for pretty much everything; it's not just about sexual orientation, but about everything else. I live my life a certain way and my friends may not agree with the way I live, but they're my friends. I don't ever lie or sugar-coat who I am and they don't either, so we get along fine.

Last year, you went on a Twitter tirade about gay guys on the downlow. What inspired that rant?

For me, I have no issues with what people are in general; I'm just like, Be clear about it so that I know what and who I'm dealing with, because the kind of person that I am, you know exactly who I am when you meet me. I'm not a big fan of the secret undercover type (laughs). I think it's bad; I don't like it. It's terrible, actually. I think if you don't know what your sexual orientation is then you need to take time out and figure it out, but I don't think you should trick people. That's an issue for me.

You weren't dating a closeted gay guy, were you?

I hope not! (Laughs) But I will say I've had girlfriends before where I've been like, "Umm, yeah, he's totally gay!" I know a gay man when I see one.

Because your gay-dar is so good?

Honestly, they gravitate toward me. I really don't have to do anything. I'm 5-feet-10, I'm black, I wear mini skirts and great shoes; it's not brain surgery.

continued on page 33

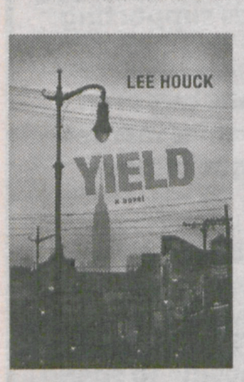
book review

New Year Suggestions

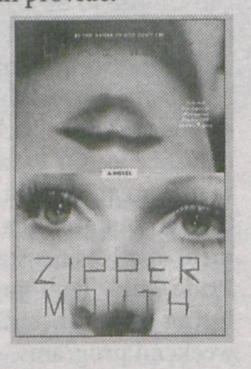
By Lewis Maurer, Library Services Administrator, Dauphin County Library System

A dozen titles to start the New Year, from love stories to mysteries, ex-gays to Broadway, well-known to new authors; you are bound to find reading delight in these books available from the Dauphin County Library System.

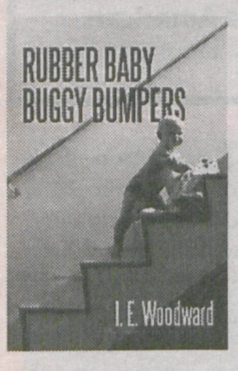
Spread Eagle
Killian, Kevin
"Kevin Killian is the greatest unsung genius in contemporary American literature."--Dennis Cooper
Publisher: Alyson Books



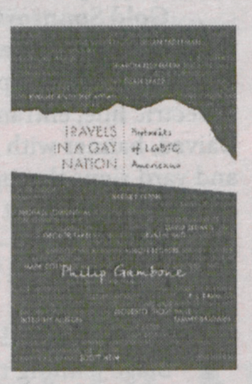
Yield
Houck, Lee
Houck confronts controversial and timely topics such as gay bashing and equality in this powerhouse debut about the families gay men create and the support only friends can provide.
Kensington Publishing Corporation Pub Date:



Rubber Baby Buggy Bumpers
The book encompasses a variety of genres including gay fiction, mystery, and humor. I am glad I stepped outside of my comfort zone and gave Woodward's novel a try! Once I started reading I was hooked.
--Kam Aures for Rebeccasreads.com
Woodward, I E
Publisher: iUniverse.com



Zipper Mouth
Weeks, Laurie
The long-awaited debut novel from Boys Don't Cry screenwriter Laurie Weeks.
Publisher: Alyson Books



Travels in a Gay Nation: Portraits of LGBTQ Americans
Gambone, Philip
Publisher: University of Wisconsin Press Pub Date: 06/2010

Human Relations Repeal contd from page one

Cost containment also plagues capital city Harrisburg. Will the city be the next local governmental entity to drop its human relations commission?

As reported in the Sept-Oct 2010 issue, Central Voice discovered a recommendation by Management Partners, Inc. that the financially beleaguered capital city eliminate its Human Resources Commission and forward all complaints to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission. The recommendation is on page 244 of a 257-page document prepared last January, originally a 29-page document, and expanded in April to 257 pages by Management Partners. The consulting firm had been asked by Harrisburg Mayor Linda Thompson to prepare a financial management plan for the city to consider as it seeks ways to pay down $288 million in debt.

Rabbi Paskoff

Although the report is now thought of as no longer "in play," cost containment never goes out of fashion. Harrisburg city controller Dan Miller in a formal report to city council forecast income of $54 million for 2011, about $6 million less than recent years' annual budgets.

Like Harrisburg, the Lancaster County Human Relations Commission is a taxpayer-funded agency started in 1962 to resolve local conflicts. Supporters have said it's more in touch with the Lancaster community than a similar statewide agency, but those who backed the proposal to cut the agency have said it's redundant.

Equality Pennsylvania partnered with and supported the efforts of leading repeal opponent, The Committee to Defend Civil Rights in Lancaster. Led by activist Adanjesus Marin, the group began its work in March 2010 when they initiated a public campaign to add lgbt protections to the county ordinance. Their efforts began after a public forum on a similar statewide initiative in which about 250 Lancaster residents expressed strong support for such protections.

"Today's vote once again demonstrates the inherent unity of the lgbt equality movement with the broader civil rights movement. This attack on all civil rights was in part a reaction to our community's demands for inclusion. The enemies of lgbt rights and civil rights are the same and as we move forward to win protection against lgbt discrimination we will continue to fight side by side to restore the protections taken away today," Marin commented.

On the eve of the one week anniversary of the vote dissolving the commission, a group gathered Nov. 23 for an open mike session and candle lighting at Thaddeus Steven's Tomb, Shreiner's Cemetery.

Federal Health Report Includes Gay Health

The US Department of Health and Human Services' launch of Healthy People 2020, the federal government's agenda for improving the health of Americans, includes for the first time a section devoted to lgbt health. The blueprint includes a call for the development and dissemination of successful interventions to curb HIV rates among gay and bisexual men.

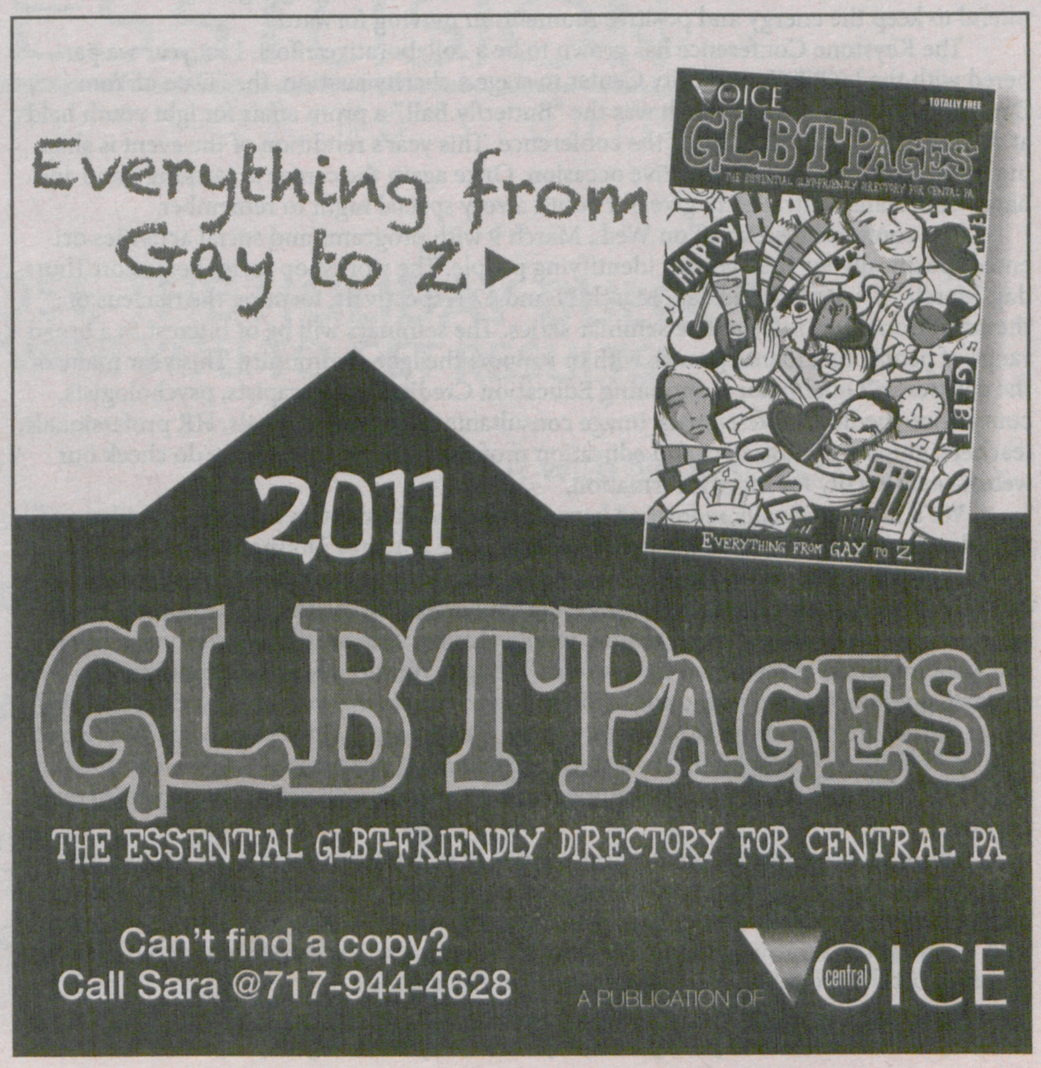
According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), an estimated 532,000 gay and bisexual men are living with HIV in the U.S. Another estimated 28,700 gay and bisexual men in the U.S. are infected with HIV each year - a rate forty-four times higher than that of heterosexual men. While new infections have declined among both heterosexuals and injection drug users, the annual number of new HIV infections among gay and bisexual men has steadily increased since the early 1990s.

Uganda's Rolling Stone Bullies Gays

Escalating their war on homosexuality, Uganda's Rolling Stone newspaper has blamed the Kampala bombings on gays, as well as suggesting links to terrorist Joseph Kony in the North section of that country. The articles cited no author and relied on unnamed sources, claiming that July attacks in Kampala during the World Cup were plotted by "deadly homosexuals living abroad." The article claims homosexuals are angry that the government won't respect their rights.

The paper claims that homosexuals from the Middle East paid Somali terror group Al-Shabaab to bomb Kampala due to outrage over the Anti-Homosexuality Bill.

Finally, gays are blamed for funding the Lord's Resistance Army who have committed atrocities in the North.



2011 Pride Sponsorship Levels Announced

The 2011 Pride Festival of Central PA is the 20th event!

Since 1992, the local, all volunteer organization, now a project of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities, has held an annual festival each summer to promote awareness and showcase organizations and businesses available to the lgbt and allied community.

"Past leaders have broadened the event from a few hours on a Saturday to three days, said Justin Bacon, president. This year dates are Fri., July 29, Sat., July 30, and Sun., July 31.

"We're poised to talk with sponsors about a quality," Bacon said. Held along the banks of the Susquehanna River, the event regularly attracts about 5,000 people from the surrounding eight counties and the mid-Atlantic region. Counties include Perry, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Berks, York, and Adams. Nearby cities and states in recent years have included Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, DC; Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Northern Virginia.

"Out of town guests directly associated with the festival rented about 50 hotel rooms in the greater Harrisburg area last year," Bacon said. About 40 meals were purchased by the board for entertainment of out of town guests.

Sponsorship Levels

The event offers these sponsorship levels. "Due to deadlines, Pride will need to have the funds in hand no later than June 1," Bacon said. The venue offers two types of sponsorships levels: A business can choose to be a general sponsor or sponsor a specific element of the festival.

Platinum Sponsors - $15,000 ++

Naming Rights to the Festival, 10 tickets, 4 vendor spaces, including 2 electric lines, entrance fee for Parade waived, banner with logo at Pride Stage and yard signs throughout grounds, verbal acknowledgement at all events stages, ad in Official Pride Guide (full-page color), web site listing with link and logo, listing in related weekend programs.

Gold Sponsors - $10,000

Naming Rights to Festival wrist bands, 5 tickets, 2 vendor spaces, including 1 electric line, entrance fee for Parade waived, banner with logo at Pride Stage and yard signs throughout grounds, verbal acknowledgement at all event stages, ad in Pride Guide (full -page color), web site listing with link and logo, listing in related weekend programs.

South Festival Stage - $6,500

Stage naming rights, includes all benefits of Red Level sponsorship.

Parade Color Guard Sponsor - $5,000

Parade naming rights, includes all benefits of Red Level sponsorship plus name/logo carried at beginning of parade and placed on parade stage. All pre-event advertisement will be listed as "Pride Fest Unity Parade brought to you by (company).

South Stage Entertainment - $4,500

Naming rights for sponsoring performers, includes all the benefits of Red Level sponsorship.

Red Sponsors - $3,500

5 tickets, vendor space, including one electric line, Parade entrance fee waived, banner with logo at Pride Stage, verbal acknowledgement at all event stages, ad in Pride Guide (half-page color), web site listing with link and logo, listing in related weekend programs.

North Stage Entertainment - $3,000

Naming rights for sponsoring performers, includes all the benefits of Orange Level sponsorship.

North Festival Stage - $2,750

Naming rights for stage, includes all the benefits of Orange Level sponsorship.

Orange Sponsors - $2,500

Vendor space, including electric, entrance fee for Parade waived, banner (supplied by sponsor), displayed on festival grounds, verbal acknowledgement at all stage events, ad in Pride Guide (quarter-page color), web site listing with link and logo, listing in related weekend programs.

Parade Drum Major Sponsor - $2,000

Naming rights for sponsoring band, includes all Yellow Level benefits, all pre-event and parade announcing/advertising will list company as sponsor of band and company name/logo will be carried in front of band. Company parade entry will be placed in parade immediately following the sponsored marching band.

Yellow Sponsors - $1,500

Vendor space (only) at festival, festival logo on yard signs placed throughout grounds, verbal acknowledgement at all event stages, ad in Pride Guide (quarter-page black and white, web site listing with link and logo, listing in related weekend programs.

Parade Stage Sponsor - $850

Naming rights of parade stage, includes all Green Level benefits, all advertisement will refer to parade stage as the sponsor's stage.

Green Sponsors - $750

Verbal acknowledgement at Pride and Parade Stage, ad in Pride Guide (business card, black and white), web site listing with link and logo, listing in related weekend programs.

Blue Sponsors - $150

Listing on event web site with link and logo, listing in related weekend programs.

Purple Sponsors - $50

Listing on festival web site.

Dollar Impact - Pride Festival of Central PA

- **7,850 donated to lgbt organizations in region**
- **2,500 donated last 2 years to Easch-Potter Scholarship Fund**
- **2% of lgbt Americans consider buying brands providing equal workplace benefits**
- **81% of lgbt Americans consider buying brands supporting non-profits**
- **64% of Americans buy products from companies marketing directly to lgbt community.**
- **20% of lgbt households have children.**
- **LGBT consumers have more discretionary income to spend than the average American family.**

transgender column

TransCentralPA Keystone Conference March 9-13

By Jeanine Ruhsam
President, TransCentralPA
Co-Chair, the Keystone Conference

Three years ago a few of us energetic and determined members of TransCentralPA thought it would be a good idea to stage a gender conference here in the region. Thus "The Keystone Conference: A Celebration of Gender Diversity" was born.

We are now launching the third annual event (see www.keystone_conference.org), which takes place at the Sheraton Harrisburg-Hershey Hotel March 9-13. We began with a realistic vision, and high hopes. We've seen our hopes surpassed in the increasing numbers of attendees, in the quality of the workshops and presenters, in the supportive programs and in the social functions.

For 2010, we were the third-largest attended gender conference in the US and also the most affordable. The "buzz" about Keystone and the Harrisburg region grows. We intend to keep the energy and positive momentum moving forward.

The Keystone Conference has grown to be a collaborative effort. Last year we partnered with the LGBT Community Center to stage a charity auction, the "Date of Your Dreams", the benefactor of which was the "Butterfly Ball," a prom affair for lgbt youth held at the hotel on Friday evening of the conference. This year's rendition of the event is shaping up to be quite a large and festive occasion. Once again the center is working hand-in-hand with TransCentralPA to give our youth a very special night to remember.

The conference kicks off on Wed., March 9 with programs and social activities oriented specifically for transgender identifying people. The workshop series begins on Thursday, March 10, with Fri. and Sat., March 11 and 12 respectively, forming the nucleus of the educational and informative seminar series. The seminars will be of interest to a broad range of people that identify, work with or support the lgbt community. This year many of the courses will qualify for Continuing Education Credits (for therapists, psychologists, counselors, medical professionals, image consultants, legal professionals, HR professionals, teachers, guidance counselors and education professionals, etc.), so please do check our website continually for more information.

We'll have nationally renowned keynote speakers for the three meals on Friday and Saturday, including the LGBT Center's new Executive Director Donna Rose.

Now, about the social side of this event! Come with an appetite and wear your dancing shoes Saturday night: following a cocktail reception outside the Commonwealth ballroom and our elegant dinner within, we'll be having a dance till the wee hours. Should you want more, the trans-social events actually begin Wednesday at Suba/Mangia Qui with our own guest bartender, music and dining; Thursday evening we board coaches to travel up for dinner and fun at the Hollywood Casino, and Friday night we again coach down to dine on Harrisburg's Restaurant Row at five participating restaurants, followed by clubbing at our local "family" night spots. A shuttle bus is provided on all nights for registered event attendees.

This is an event for all that have an interest in or connection with the transgender community- which, I hope, includes many of you that are readers of this journal and are members of the lgbt community of central Pennsylvania. It's a great opportunity to mingle with us and get to know what and who we are. Please come, please participate, and please help support the growth and acceptance of your Trans family.

With best wishes for a blessed New Year.

Info: www.transcentralpa.org, www.keystone _conference.org

Former Central Voice Writer Publishes 4th Movie Book

John DiLeo

Back in the days when Hollywood was still in "studio mode," stars, directors, crew, and writers gathered on the set to celebrate birthdays. One of those famed authors, Tennessee Williams, will be 100 years old March 26. In his fourth book, former Central Voice freelance writer John DiLeo explores an extraordinary group of actors who made Williams characters come alive on screen for millions.

"Tennessee Williams and Company, His Essential Screen Actors" covers 11 actors all of whom appear in more than one Williams' film. All together DiLeo delves into 23 performances with 23 photographs, among them Marlon Brando, Vivien Leigh, Karl Malden, Anna Magnani, Paul Newman, Elizabeth Taylor, Joanne Woodward, Geraldine Page, Richard Burton, Mildred Dunnock, and Madeline Sherwood.

DiLeo's books have been praised in the Washington Post, the Village Voice, and the Hollywood Reporter. Unique to his research and writing is the tremendous detail. Labyrinth movie-making machinations are streamlined for an informative read. The ins and outs of casting, dialogue, and director/actor tensions and joys are revealed in a remarkable 204 pages. The photos are iconic. Film buffs beware – you don't want to be without this book.

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Stonewall Democrats Party at Stage on Herr

Stonewall Democrats gathered for a holiday celebration last month at Stage on Herr, in midtown Harrisburg, PA.

more photos next page >

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2) Your surviving partner may end up with nothing and may even have to go to court to prove ownership of property that was rightfully theirs.
3) As for funeral arrangements, if you do not give specific instructions, your partner will not have any legal right to carry out your wishes and could even be barred from the funeral services. Funeral arrangements made in advance will add weight to your wishes.
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5) Please see our website for further information.

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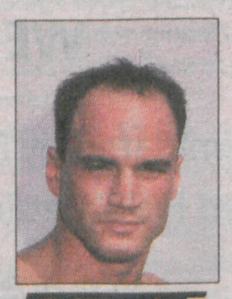

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< Stonewall Democrats

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From Harrisburg to Mauckingbird:

Bringing Gay-Themed Theater to Philadelphia

By Debra Miller

A rising star in Philadelphia's cultural community, Mauckingbird Theatre Company--the city's one and only professional gay-themed company--has a local connection to Harrisburg, in its eponymous Co-Founder, Lindsay Mauck. I met Mauck last month at New Candlelight Theatre in Wilmington, Delaware, where she was a standout in the cast of Seussical the Musical. While speaking with her, I learned that she grew up in Harrisburg's Colonial Park area and attended Central Dauphin High School.

At Central Dauphin, Mauck appeared each year in the school's annual musical and participated in many other extracurricular musical activities (marching band, concert band, jazz band, jazz combo, orchestra, and choir), which gave her the opportunity to perform throughout Central Pennsylvania and the entire state. She has been seen on several area stages, including Allenberry Playhouse, Theatre Harrisburg, Oyster Mill Playhouse, and Hershey Area Playhouse.

After graduating high school, Mauck left Harrisburg to attend Temple University in Philadelphia, where she majored in Music Education. While working on a grant application there with one of her professors, Peter Reynolds, the two became friends,

Lindsay Mauck
Photo by Jay Sullivan

and Reynolds talked to her frequently about his ideas to produce a show. In 2007, the opportunity presented itself for a performance space at the Adrienne Theater, at 2030 Sansom Street in Center City. They took it, and did their first show, Molière's The Misanthrope, featuring an all-male cast. It was so well received that they decided to continue with "the little venture" they

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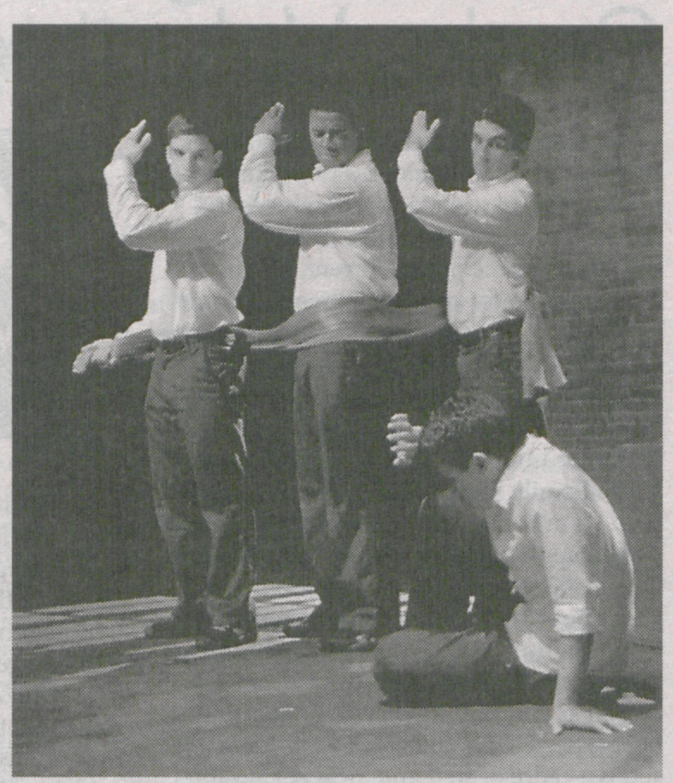
Gay-Themed Theater cond't from page 20

called Mauckingbird Theatre Company, with Mauck serving as Managing Director and Reynolds as Artistic Director.

Though Mauckingbird's mission statement professes a gay focus ("Mauckingbird Theatre Company is committed to producing professional gay-themed theatre, while also exploring classic literature and musical genres and providing affordable productions of infrequently produced works"), Mauck is gratified to have received critical acclaim from the mainstream Philadelphia press as well. City Paper proclaimed that "Mauckingbird takes the definition of gay theater from high camp to high class" and Philadelphia Magazine raved, "Gay or not Gay, this is simply good theater." For Mauck:



The cast of Shakespeare's R & J: Evan Jonigkeit, Newton Buchanan, Nicholas Park, and Conrad Ricamora. Photo by John Flak

It is so important to us to be able to present professional theater, and though all of our work is through a Gay lens, we strive to make our productions accessible to a wide audience base. Mauckingbird produces good theater--classic, time-tested stories seen in a new light, musicals, and new works dealing with LGBTQ themes.

Recent past productions by Mauckingbird include an all-male version of Shakespeare's R & J (2008) , a lesbian adaptation of Hedda Gabler (2009), a gender-bending A Midsummer Night's Dream, and a repertory of TRU and The Threshing Floor (2010)--two one-man shows about the influential gay writers Truman Capote and James Baldwin. All have been praised consistently by audiences and critics alike, and have been successful in sensitizing Philadelphia theater-goers to LGBTQ issues and casting.

In 2010, Mauckingbird Theatre Company was awarded a Provost Seed Grant in the amount of $36,500 from Temple University, through Mauckingbird's Co-Founder and Artistic Director Peter Reynolds (who also currently serves as the Head of Musical Theater for the Department of Theater at Temple), in collaboration with his colleague, Professor Scott Gratson. The project, Queer, Get Used to It, will collect personal narratives from gay youths in Philadelphia and New York, to investigate the ways in which today's young people are redefining Queerness and labels of sexual identity. The final results will be an original theatrical piece and live performance, a public discussion of the nature and future of the politics of sexual identity, and a presentation of personal stories dealing with the complexity of Queer identity (which will be collected, filmed, and screened for the public).

Up next, on stage at the Adrienne, from January 11-30, Mauckingbird presents the Philadelphia premiere of the New York hit, [title of show]—a milestone of the four-year-old company as its first ever musical production and initial foray into that part of its mission. The "quirky comedy about creative expression and taking risks" is a Post-Modern tribute to the long tradition of behind-the-scenes self-referencing Broadway musicals like A Chorus Line. As the show explains, the production is "a musical about two guys writing a musical about two guys writing a musical." The authors' premise is that their conversation about what to write is more interesting than any fictional plot they could invent, so they focus their writing instead on the creation of their own original musical, starring themselves and supported by two of their female friends.

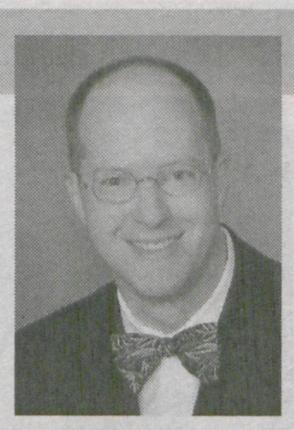
Mauckingbird's all-star award-winning cast, directed by Reynolds, includes some of the best actors and singers in Philadelphia: Michael Philip O'Brien (Hunter), Ben Dibble (Jeff), Kate Brennan (Susan), and Kim Carson (Heidi), with Mat Wright, a Barrymore Award-winner for Musical Direction, as the pianist (Larry). In accord with its mission statement, tickets are priced affordably at $25 for adults, $20 for seniors, and $15 for students. The show kicks off with a preview performance on Tuesday, January 11 at 7:30 pm, and opening night on Wednesday, January 12.

For tickets and information, call the Mauckingbird Box Office at (215) 923-8909, or go to its website at www.mauckingbird.org. Believe Mauck when she says, "[title of show] is such a witty, fun, smart show, that I feel sad for anyone who misses it!" The Philadelphia theater community should be happy that Mauck and Reynolds themselves took the risk for creative expression and brought Mauckingbird Theatre Company to the public.

Poster for Mauckingbird Theatre Company's A Midsummer Night's Dream. Photo by Jill McCorkel, design by CanaryPromo.com.

legal column

In the Best Interest of the Child(ren)



By Leo L. Dunn

This phrase is often referred to in child custody matters. In Pennsylvania, as in most states, the "best interest of the child" is supposed to be the paramount criteria when deciding every issue in a child custody dispute. What is the best interest of the child when one, both, or all three parents are gay/lesbian? Did you read that right -- three parents? Yes, let me explain.

When a gay couple decides to have children, they obviously need to obtain either an egg or semen from a third party. Often this is a family member or a friend who is also gay. Male couples also need to have a surrogate carry the fertilized egg during gestation. Their second option is to adopt a non-related child.

Adoption is the easiest method to plan for legally in Pennsylvania. The gay couple should first have a domestic partnership agreement in place spelling out their legal obligations to each other in regards to household matters and how resources would be distributed should they separate at a later date. They should next have a co-parenting agreement created spelling out each person's obligations to the child(ren) they intend to raise. Third, they should assure that they have insurance policies and a will in place that can provide the surviving parent or a guardian with the ability to financially support the child(ren) in case of a catastrophic accident as well as verifying that the child(ren) will be covered under one or both partners' health insurance. Only after these documents are in place should they proceed to the actual adoption. In Pennsylvania, gay couples may do what is called a 'second parent adoption.' In essence, one partner does the initial adoption of the child then the second parent also adopts the child through the 'second parent adoption' procedure. It is critical that the couple have an attorney guide them through this process so that everything is presented to the Orphan's Court in the manner required in the particular county.

In the situation where one partner of a couple has one of her eggs fertilized by a male friend's sperm, the resulting child is legally the child of the two biological parents. The third parent is the biological mom's partner. This situation is more complicated legally and should be planned for carefully. The couple should have a domestic partnership agreement, co-parenting agreement, will and insurances in place just like the adopting parents above. The couple also needs an agreement in place whereby the rights and obligations of the sperm donor are clearly delineated including financial contributions to the household, insurance coverage, educational expenses, and child support and custody. These can range from no rights to being a full co-parent. If the donor is to be a full co-parent, he needs to understand that he is obligated to support the child until age 18. If he is giving up all rights, the parenting couple needs to understand that they must undertake the full burden of all child rearing expenses. In either case, the non-biological partner needs to become a legal parent of the child(ren) through the second parent adoption process. If the sperm donor continues parents rights and the partner gains parental status as a 'second parent,' the child(ren) now have three parents. All of whom are legally obligated to help raise and support the child to adulthood.

Courts in both the United States and Canada have supported this 'three parent' approach as in the best interest of the child. In Canada, the Canadian Supreme Court ruled that a straight male who had contributed sperm to a lesbian couple and recognized the resulting child in his life activities, including spending time with his biological children by his wife, was a parent for custody matters. The court reasoned that it was better for the child to have the support of three loving parents and the possibility of three inheritances rather than just two noting that the practical definition of family continued to evolve. Here in Pennsylvania, a Superior Court decision required a known sperm donor to pay child support to the biological mother of a lesbian couples' children based on similar reasoning – three potential sources of support are better than two from the children's perspective.

Thus, if you are planning to have children in a same-sex partnership, you need to plan carefully in order to protect you and your child to the greatest extent possible. You want all potential issues addressed so that if a problem or separation occurs, the child(ren) may continue life in as normal a manner as possible without needing to be used as the rope in a legal tug-of-war in court.

Leo Dunn is an attorney and counselor-at-law practicing in Harrisburg with a focus on the estate planning needs of the GLBT community. He may be reached at leo@leodunnlaw.com

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Chamber on the move

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GAY AND LESBIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Annual Meeting Jan. 14

By Bill Kretz

The chamber is very pleased to announce that the Annual Meeting and Dinner will be held on Friday, Jan. 14 at the Hotel Hershey. This is traditionally the major business event for the lgbt community. There will be a special reception in advance of the dinner as well as events after the meal. Be sure to check out the special rates that the hotel is offering our guests. For additional information or to become a sponsor, contact Seth Hamill at seth.hamill@gmail.com.

In other news, if you are not attending the chamber networking/mixer events, you are missing opportunities to meet potential clients. The chamber's networking events continue to be a great success. Our November mixer was quite successful as everyone traveled to the Ephrata Performing Arts Center Nov. 3 to see "'The Full Monty".

The Dec. 9 holiday mixer was at Jeffrey's Flowers and Home Accents in Mechanicsburg. This event was an overflow crowd and allowed our members and guests to start their holiday shopping. There is no mixer in January due to the Annual Meeting event.

The February mixer is being sponsored by Laguna Pointe Salon & Day Spa in Mechanicsburg starting at 6 p.m. See the web site for further details and remember to RSVP via the web site www.cpglcc.org.

Chamber board representatives attended the 3rd Annual Multicultural Celebrations & Joyful Traditions Luncheon, as well as staffed a table at the HACC Allies event.

Russell Boggs, Board President, and Deborah Gable, Secretary, attended the Out for Business Conference 2010 in Washington DC. The conference was rich with networking opportunities, political updates, and information on the work of the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Attending meetings with staff and volunteer board members of Gay and Lesbian Chambers of Commerce from across the country provided strategies and vision for continuing to grow the Central PA Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce in the upcoming year. A strong take-away message is that business is the force that will move inclusion and diversity work forward, regardless of the political environment. Successful business leaders know that in order to remain competitive, their workplaces must value every person based on their skills and knowledge.

The chamber is also looking for volunteers from the business community to participate in our various committee meetings. If you are thinking of joining an lgbt professional organization, please visit our web site and check out the various committees. Contact us if you can help out.

Please remember to keep your lgbt dollars within the community. The chamber has the only comprehensive directory for lgbt-owned and friendly businesses. Please go to the chamber's web site for more details.

Info: www.cpglcc.org

Black and White Party Seeks Volunteers

With plans for the 5th Annual Black & White Party well under way, organizers for the May 14 event have been receiving requests from people online offering to volunteer for the popular event. Organizers are asking for more volunteers to come forward.

To date, the event has raised about $70,000 for The AIDS Fund of South Central Pennsylvania, which provides grant funds to local HIV organizations, and York's Family First Health's HIV Program.

"I'm thrilled that so many people have signed up to volunteer on our website," said Charles King, originator of the event. Last year, about 200 volunteers came forward to help staff the event. "We have community theatre professionals helping us every year as well as community service groups and businesses," King said. Each year Starbucks sends a cadre of staff and local restaurants provide tasty free food during the pre-show portion of the benefit.

The venue moves this year to Zembo Shrine Auditorium and Event Complex in Harrisburg.

"The Zembo is a beautiful, historic space that will allow us to grow even more," King said. He also explained that York's Club XS, home to the benefit from 2007-2010, "has been very generous to us in the past, but we have outgrown our space there."

Although the club did not charge for its space, King said the benefit will see savings from the move. The "party" has also moved on the calendar to the second weekend of May and is scheduled for May 14.

Each year the audience is dazzled with originally-stage numbers, original choreography and the staging of popular songs and themes. Chad Alan-Carr is directing the Main Stage Show with the assistance of several assistant directors and a talented new artistic team assembled for 2011.

Chris Quigley, who directed the indoor stage shows for all prior years, is directing the first half of the event's entertainment on formal stage separate from the Main Stage Show.

The Artistic Committee is keeping this year's theme secret for a while longer. Rumor has it that there MIGHT be a high-stepping kick-line.

How you can help:

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- Assistant, Hair and Make-Up
- Hair and Make-Up artists

Info: c.king@theblackandwhiteparty.com, 717-814-8862.

Quentin Eshleman Jumps into Making It Better

Originally from Boyertown

By Frank Pizzoli

Like the song in the Broadway musical South Pacific, those who hate must be taught to do so.

Former Boyertown (Berks County) resident Quentin Eshleman, 42, remembers well what he was taught. He also remembers how much it did not match his own perceptions as he grew up. He knew he was different.

Eshleman left his home area 16 years ago and has lived the last six years with his partner Ron, 47, near Allentown.

"I'm happy now, as happy as I've ever been, but the journey has been trying at times," Eshleman tells Central Voice. A bright kid with obvious musical talents for the piano and voice, he ended up engaged to a woman and nearly walked down with her before the dam broke.

"I was miserable, going through "ex-gay" therapy. Nowhere to turn," he said, those old feelings changing the pitch of his voice as he speaks. His church congregation excommunicated and shunned those judged not welcome in their pews. His brother was also pastor, his father head elder, and another brother a deacon. "As conflicted as my life was, it was completely centered on family, church, and community. I had no other frame of reference," Eshleman explained. "I was so wrapped up in all this judgmental religion, thought of as a sinner for being gay, I deeply feared repercussions."

Quentin Eshleman

Additional pressures rumbled up from his extended "ex-gay" therapy that by 26 had lasted several years. In a twist of fate, his therapist advised him to separate from his family, thinking his reluctance to denounce homosexuality and embrace heterosexuality was really just youthful aggravation challenging authority.

Truth Wins Out's Executive Director Wayne Besen said about Eshleman "Ex-gay therapy is not truly about changing one's sexual orientation. It is primarily a public relations campaign by anti-gay organizations designed to make the public think it is possible to 'pray away the gay'. Once people are sold on this concept, they have an easier time justifying their prejudice or voting against lgbt rights."

"I surprised everyone when I did leave, including myself," Eshleman said. He left his parents' home at age 26 and finally had enough time and quiet to learn about himself absent judgments from family, church, and a counselor who had spent six years trying to make the "gay" go away. "Slowly I grew to like myself, become myself, and explore.

I knew I was gay and it was good," he said.

"Ex-gay therapy is not benign," Besen said "It is a harmful practice that shatters lives and leaves mental scars

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Former Congressman Bob Barr Calls for DOMA Repeal

By Tony Varona

Having already called for the repeal of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act when he ran for president in 2008 as the Libertarian Party nominee, former Georgia Senator Bob Barr recently returned to the topic of DOMA. He addressed a symposium called "Legal, Secular, and Religious Perspectives on Marriage Equality/Marriage Protection/Same-Sex Marriage" at St. John's University School of Law, New York City.

Barr, who was the lead author and lead sponsor of DOMA when he served as the Congressman from the seventh district in Georgia, now characterizes DOMA as an example of excessive government control of private relationships.

About himself Barr said: When Bob Barr was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, he became famous for quite a few things. Conservative as they come, Barr was an adamant supporter of impeaching President Bill Clinton over his affair with Monica Lewinsky. He also once tried to get the Pentagon to ban Wicca in the military, and made controversial statements about how he couldn't take people with "cult hairstyles" seriously in meetings.

But despite these more bombastic and colorful moments of his Congressional career, Barr was also critically involved with major pieces of legislation. One of his biggest "accomplishments," much to the dismay of the lgbt community, was authoring a piece of legislation known as the Defense of Marriage Act, known as DOMA. Barr wrote the bill in 1996, fearing that state courts might make moves to legalize same-sex marriage, and he didn't want other states or the federal government to have to recognize those laws.

DOMA passed with flying colors. And 14 years later, it's still on the books, preventing same-sex couples from hundreds of benefits that heterosexual-married couples take for granted. The fact that gay couples can't sponsor their bi-national partner for legal immigration status? It's because of DOMA. The fact that gay couples can't inherit social security benefits or share health insurance if one of them works for the federal government? It's because of DOMA. The fact that a legally-married gay couple in Massachusetts can travel to Florida (or any of the other 40+ states that do not recognize marriage equality) and be treated like a second class citizen? Yup, that's DOMA's fault, too.

All of this should be enough to get a picture of Bob Barr's mug placed on every gay person's dartboard around the country. Except now, Barr admits that he was wrong to write DOMA, and is urging Congress to repeal the Act, which he says failed miserably and actually ends up violating core parts of the Constitution.

Anyone know that song, "I Wish That I Knew What I Know Now When I Was Younger?" If only Bob Barr had been privy to this song in 1996.

Now Barr calls DOMA flawed legislation.

"Here we had a piece of federal legislation that said for federal law purposes only... this is what marriage means, reflecting the vast majority of Members of Congress representing the vast majority of people in the country at the time in 1996. A lawful union of one man and one woman. Yet what happened is rather than simply provide a shield for purposes of distributing federal moneys pursuant to that definition, the Defense of Marriage Act over the intervening years has been used as a club to force states not to adopt any definition of marriage other than the one that is supposed to apply just for federal law purposes," Barr said.

Barr also said "The federal government has no business whatsoever defining social, personal relationships other than those perhaps that relate specifically to an enumerated proper function of the government. For example, [with] the issue of Don't Ask, Don't Tell, one can say that at least the issue of homosexual activity or homosexual persons in the military falls within the ambit of a legitimate government concern. [The issue of gays in the military] falls into a very different category than something that ought to be defined as that large universe of policy decisions left by the Tenth Amendment to the people of the states, and that is where the issue of marriage always resided until recent decades."

DOMA as a brutal club. Sounds like an apt analogy.

Dauphin County Commissioner Race

Eric Papenfuse, owner, Harrisburg's Midtown Scholar Bookstore, last month announced his campaign for Dauphin County Commissioner in the 2011 Democratic Primary election. Papenfuse, 39, lives in Harrisburg with his wife and three children. A former public school teacher at Central Dauphin East and Linglestown Junior High Schools, Papenfuse attended Yale University.

TechQuest Suggests Government Savings

Three representatives from the TechQuest Cost-Savings Committee presented strategies for more than $2 billion in government cost savings at a hearing of the Senate Government Management and Cost Study Commission.

Representing TechQuest PA were Chairman Michael L. Hund, Esq., McNees, Wallace & Nurick, LLC, Harrisburg, PA; Gary Johnson, Continuous Improvement, Product Change Management, The Hershey Company, Hershey, PA; and Chris Meehan, an executive with SAS, a global leader in efficiency and performance analytics software and services headquartered in Carey, NC.

"Our group quickly identified more than $2 billion in immediate and reoccurring savings that, if initiated, will impact the state budget, based on published House and Senate reports," Mr. Hund said. He will present documented savings which include:

*$1.0 Billion – Using technology to merge the hundreds of Employment Benefit Trust Funds in school districts and other government entities under the umbrella of the Pennsylvania Employee Benefit Trust Fund.

*$550 Million – Using technology to manage the two largest state pensions, PSERS and SERS via the index fund/passive management style of fund management popularized by Pennsylvania-based The Vanguard Group.

*$500 Million - Using technology to merge the thousands of local government pension funds under the umbrella of the State Employees Retirement System (SERS).

*$25 Million – Using technology to better manage the state fleet of vehicles – Many states have outsourced this technology with great savings to the State.

Additionally, the TechQuest Pennsylvania panel has identified numerous technology cost-saving opportunities proposed by companies, industries, and in government reports, including actions in other states. "These savings can be realized with existing technology if implemented under a system of continuous management and oversight." Mr. Hund added.

*$40 Million – technology for enhanced Medicaid eligibility screening and benefit determination.

*$25 Million – technology for Medicaid Waiver Administrative Service Support.

*$25 Million – technology for Home & Community-based services, time and attendance.

*$25 Million – technology for enhanced automated pharmacy prior-Authorization.

*$20 Million – technology for enhanced tobacco and cigarette tracking.

*$5 Million – technology for healthcare dependent eligibility audits.

*$5 Million – technology to automate the review of wireless phone usage and cost savings.

The TechQuest PA panel strongly recommended the establishment of an independent, non-partisan independent agency to oversee and implement management and cost-savings strategies on a permanent basis. The Office of Continuous Improvement.

"This kind of efficiency management is a fluid and continuous process in the corporate world," Chris Meehan of SAS said. "It's is the only way to stay competitive in the 21st century." Mr. Meehan will outline applicable efficiency processes currently enabled by SAS.

"We suggest that continuous improvement processes need to be managed outside the political cycle to be effective." Mr. Meehan noted. "Tactical questions, like fraud and evasion, can be eliminated by applying existing and widely used technology and competency analytics." Mr. Meehan will provide the commission an overview of the technology involved.

The complete Techquest PA panel recommendations, and powerpoint presentations will be made available following the hearing. For further information, or panel interviews, contact Robert Philbin, 717-580-9509, or Leigh Twiford, 717-635-2113.

TechQuest Pennsylvania is the non-profit catalyst for Pennsylvania's transformation to the innovation economy and its quest for sustained growth in technology business development.

Quentin Eshleman cond't from page 23

that can often last a lifetime. So, there is good reason that attempts to change sexual orientation are rejected by every respected medical and mental health organization in America."

After healing himself in ways that embrace his sexuality, Eshleman settled into a rewarding life. When media late last year reported on a series of teenage and college age suicides by individuals who had been bullied – some of them gay or taunted because others perceived them as gay – he took action just like he had in earlier years against his own confusions.

"I had been bullied too growing up. I had to act," Eshleman said. He wrote a song now up on YouTube that comes from his heart. "I knew so well what these teenagers are going through. I'm comfortable in my own skin now. I pray now that may find peace and acceptance too," Eshleman said.

Song video @ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhB-vDGYOXU

Homophobia in the African-American Church

By Julian Bond

What are the lessons to be drawn from the geographically separated controversies over Bishop Eddie Long in Atlanta and the suicide of Rutgers student Tyler Clementi in New York?

Young Clementi took his life when his roommate secretly broadcast a sexual encounter he had with another man.

Four men have charged the Atlanta mega-church pastor with using his clerical position to coerce them into having sex with him when they were teenagers.

Homophobia is at the root of both tragedies, for if Long's travails don't seem as serious as a young boy's death, they are—if true—tragedies for Long's family and his congregation.

Homophobia is rampant in Black America, and it is driven by preachers like Long, described by the Southern Poverty Law Center as one of the most virulently homophobic Black leaders in the religiously based anti-gay movement. Black Christians are more likely to describe homosexuality as morally wrong than white Christians, and homosexuality is a major topic among many Black pulpits.

We are titillated by the descriptions of Long's alleged largesse to his four accusers, but, most of all, we are appalled at his blatant hypocrisy, if the allegations are true. But we shouldn't be—we've heard this story before. Just remember Jimmy Swaggart, Jim Bakker, Ted Haggard and Todd Bentley, all, like Long, evangelical preachers.

Long stands out in this group. All were accused of violating the standards they preached about, but none were so identified with strident opposition to homosexuality as he was. With Bernice King, Martin Luther King Jr.'s daughter, by his side, he led a march through Atlanta in 2006 in support of former President George W. Bush's anti-gay marriage constitutional amendment.

Bible-based discrimination is an old story for Black Christians, and it is peculiar why we tolerate it against others when we reject it when aimed at us. White Christians found support for enslaving people of color in the Bible's pages, which also offers support for condemning homosexuality.

Some who object to gay rights believe homosexuality is a choice, but science has demonstrated conclusively that sexual disposition is not an option or alternative that some select. It exactly parallels race—I was born Black and had no choice. I couldn't and wouldn't change it. Like race, sexuality isn't a preference—it is immutable, unchangeable and the Constitution protects us all against prejudice and discrimination based on immutable differences.

The consensus of the scientific world is that homosexuality is as ordinary as left-handedness—it is not an illness or disease.

Some who believe in Biblical literalism find sanction for their anti-homosexuality there, but selectively ignore Biblical injunctions to execute people who work on the Sabbath (Exodus 35:2), to crack down on those who get haircuts (Leviticus 19:27) or to condemn those who wear clothes with more than one kind of thread (Leviticus 19:19).

We wouldn't think of executing someone for having a Sunday job, but homophobia literally kills. We know Tyler Clementi's name because his death has been in the news, but did you know about 13-year-old Seth Walsh of Tehachapi, Calif., or 13-year-old Billy Lucas of Greensburg, Ind., who also hanged themselves, or 13-year-old Asher Brown, 13, of Houston, Texas, who shot himself in the head? They all endured anti-gay harassment and bullying until the pressure became too great, as it apparently did for Tyler Clementi.

In the aftermath of the Atlanta scandal, many are given to call Bishop Long's church "The Church of the Down Low." This refers to the homophobia-inspired fear that forces many Black gay men into underground lives in a secret sexual world—secret even from family and friends—a covert world on the "down low." The price some of us pay is AIDS.

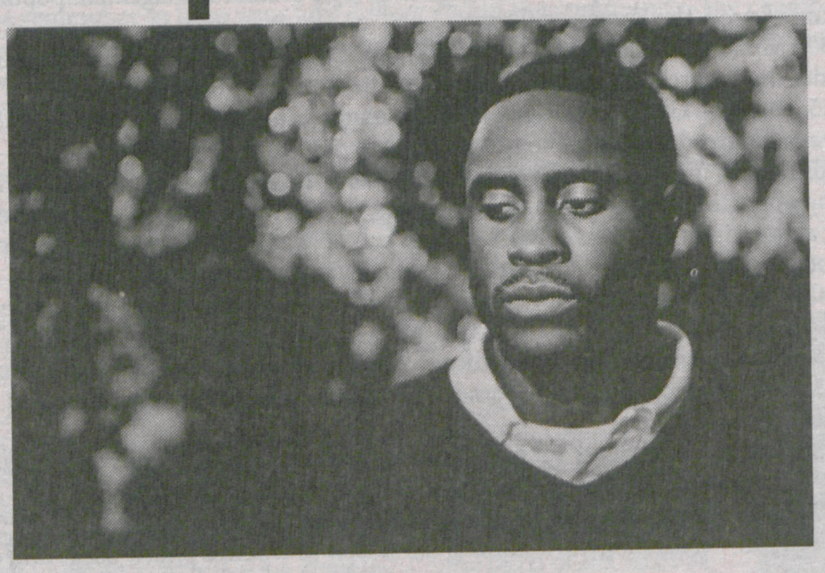
As the Atlanta Constitution's Cynthia Tucker wrote, "Bigotry fuels the scourge of AIDS in Black America, and the plague is making its greatest inroads into the population from which come the worker bees of the Black church: Black women."

We need to sweep these prejudices away, as the Supreme Court did in 1967 when it eliminated the ban on interracial marriage.

If you're worried, as many ministers profess to be, that your church will someday be forced to perform same-sex marriages, never fear. Our Constitution protects the autonomy of any religious community to determine to whom they will or won't offer the matrimonial rite. Your sanctuary is safe, but please, don't block the doors to city hall to those loving couples who want the same marriage and civil rights protections you now enjoy.

Julian Bond is chairman emeritus of the NAACP and a professor of history at the University of Virginia and a scholar in residence at American University. Reprinted with permission from The Amsterdam News.

Depressed?



Depression can affect anyone.

Talk to your doctor if you think it may be affecting you.

Depression may lead to higher rates of HIV and STD infections. Take time to learn about your health. Take steps to reduce your risk. Use condoms. Talk to your partners about HIV and STDs. Get tested regularly.

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Men4Men (M4M) is a program dedicated to the health and wellness of gay, bisexual and questioning men in South Central PA. Men4Men is a project of Alder Health Services (formerly AIDS Community Alliance). For more information on Men4Men visit myspace.com/acam4m or call 1.800.867.1550.

Men4Men is funded in part by The AIDS Fund of South Central PA , FHCCP and Highmark.

Are Hospitals Safer?

Pennsylvania's ongoing efforts to protect patients from unnecessary infections in healthcare settings are bringing measurable results, a recent report said. Data shows marked improvements in the number of healthcare-associated infections, or HAIs, reported by hospitals.

From 2008 to 2009, there was a 12.5 percent decrease in HAIs, which are infections that patients acquired while in a healthcare setting and were not present when they were admitted for care.

In addition to being one of the top causes of excess illness and death in the U.S., HAIs produce extra days of hospitalization and drive up health care costs. In Pennsylvania alone, HAIs have been cumulatively estimated to drive up costs by more than $3 billion annually. Nationwide, the cost estimate is more than $30 billion per year.

A total of 25,914 HAIs was reported by the 250 hospitals that were in continuous operation during 2009. This translates to an overall statewide rate of 2.37 HAIs per 1,000 patient days of hospitalization. If you adjust the 2008 numbers to a 12-month time frame, the data suggests there is a 12.5 percent decrease in the number of HAIs between the two time periods.

The report includes HAIs for each hospital, with an emphasis on two specific infection types: urinary tract infections associated with the use of a catheter (CAUTI) and bloodstream infections associated with the use of a central line (CLABSI). These infections are among the more common HAIs and were selected by the department and the HAI Advisory Committee for hospital-to-hospital comparisons and to measure trends over time. Future reports will analyze the patterns of another common type of HAI known as surgical site infections.

The most commonly reported HAIs in 2009 were surgical site infections (24.2 percent), urinary tract infections (23.7 percent), gastrointestinal infections (18.7 percent), and blood stream infections (12.6 percent). Among the urinary tract infections, 64 percent were associated with a urinary catheter. Among the blood stream infections, 67 percent were associated with a central line.

The report shows that 16 hospitals, or 6 percent of all hospitals in Pennsylvania, had better-than-expected performance measures in both of the infection categories highlighted in the report. Eleven hospitals, or 4 percent, had worse-than-expected performance measures in both categories.

The report includes data that will serve as a baseline for rates of healthcare-associated infections in Pennsylvania and is the first measure of progress toward decreasing those infections.

The report is based on information submitted by hospitals in Pennsylvania, beginning in February 2008, to the National Healthcare Safety Network, a system maintained and operated by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC. Hospitals are required to report the infection within 48 hours of their recognition. The state Department of Health is responsible for analyzing the data and producing an annual report.

To read the full report and review a list of higher-than-expected and lower-than-expected performers, visit the Department of Health online at www.health.state.pa.us. For more information on HAIs, visit www.cleanhandssavelives.org.

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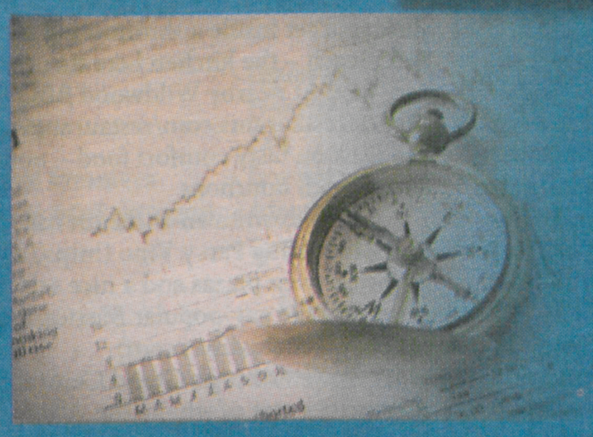

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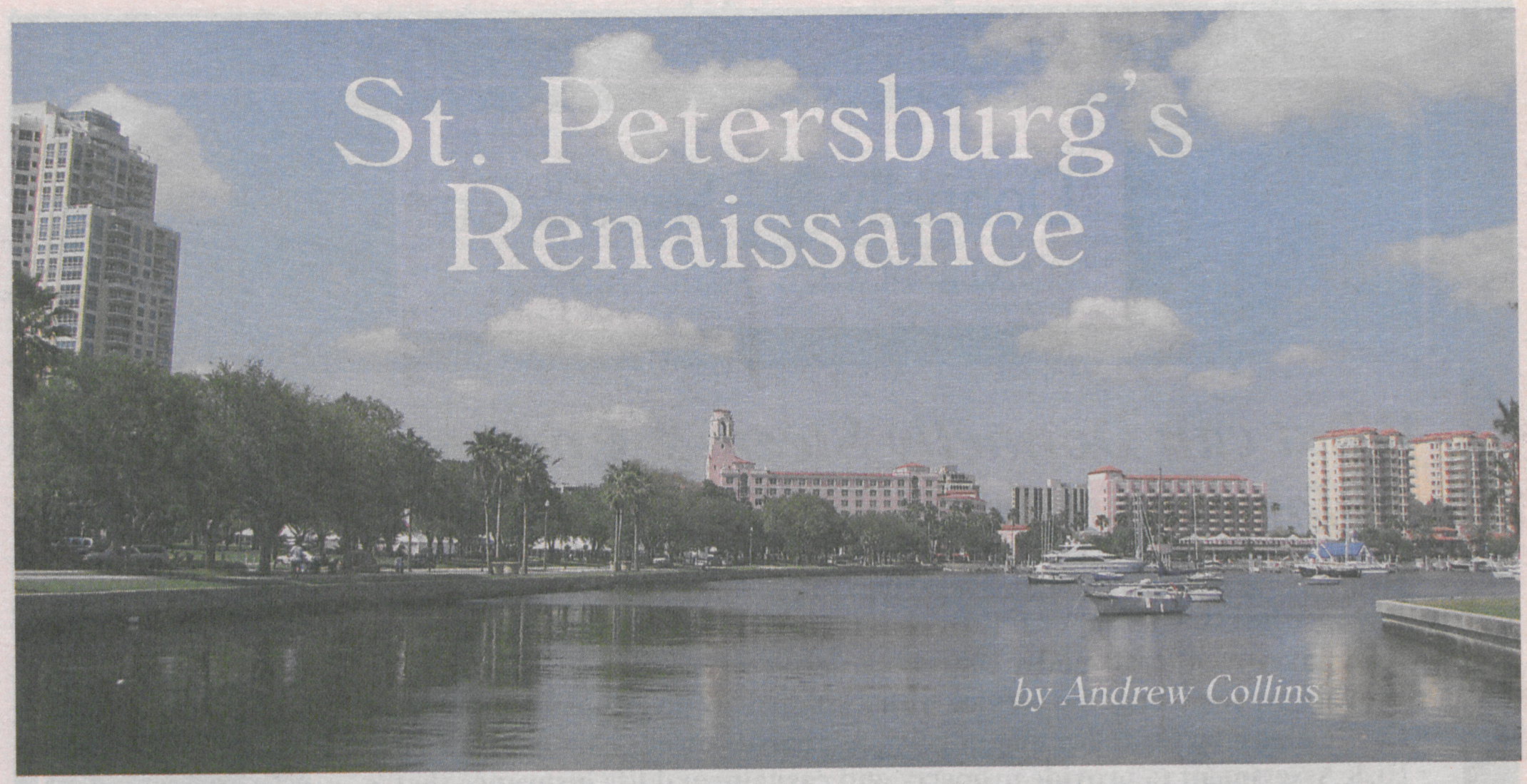

by Andrew Collins

Although Florida's fourth-largest city has seen a minimal increase in population over the past 30 years, this sunny metropolis on a peninsula between Tampa Bay and the Gulf of Mexico has changed a great deal demographically. Once unflatteringly dubbed "God's Waiting Room" for its predominant retirement-age population, the city and surrounding beach towns have become dramatically more youthful and vibrant of late, and this extends to the region's gay community, which has grown significantly. St. Petersburg now hosts the state's largest gay pride march (in late June), and the region is home to dozens of LGBT-owned businesses.

Greater St. Petersburg is made up of numerous distinct neighborhoods and municipalities, from downtown – which fringes Tampa Bay – to the many beach towns that extend south to north some 50 miles from Fort De Soto State Park (which regularly notches awards for having one of the cleanest and most beautiful beaches in the country) to Clearwater, Dunedin and Tarpon Springs. Much of the region's emerging gay scene is focused on downtown, a historic mid-city neighborhood called Kenwood, and the small town of Gulfport, which lies just across lovely Boca Ciega Bay from St. Pete Beach and the Gulf of Mexico. All of these areas have been integral in St. Petersburg's steady renaissance, increased hipster appeal and continued popularity with LGBT visitors.

Downtown St. Petersburg is home to several noteworthy hotels as well as a bumper crop of trendy restaurants and boutiques, many of these located in the upscale, open-air BayWalk shopping center. What's particularly special about downtown is the wealth of internationally renowned arts and cultural attractions. The one receiving the most attention right now is the iconic Salvador Dali Museum, which has been a fixture in St. Petersburg since the early 1980s but is slated to reopen in a dramatic new waterfront space on the south edge of downtown in January 2011 - right beside the impressive Mahaffey Theater performing arts complex.

Another must is the acclaimed Museum of Fine Arts, which has a sterling permanent collection and also mounts important traveling shows. Steps away is the striking Chihuly Collection, opened in summer 2010 and containing works by seminal glass artist Dale Chihuly. Both attractions are along leafy Beach and Bay Shore drives, which straddle a lush park and overlook Tampa Bay. From here it's a short stroll along 2nd Avenue out to St. Petersburg Pier, which is presently anchored by a kitschy-looking inverted-pyramid with touristy shops and an aquarium (it's currently slated to be razed and replaced with a new building in a few years).

Head just a couple of miles west of downtown to reach the Grand Central District, the commercial center of historic Kenwood and home to the highest concentration of gay-owned businesses in the city, not to mention dozens of impressively restored Craftsman bungalows. About four miles southwest, funky and historic Gulfport is notable for its offbeat cafes and galleries, and for hosting a popular Art Walk the first Friday and third Saturday of each month.

Continue west across the Highway 682 causeway to reach the string of barrier islands that hold the region's beach communities – turn left (south) to reach pristine Fort De Soto State Park and the charming town of Pass-A-Grille, or turn right (north) to visit tony St. Pete Beach, Treasure Island and Madeira Beach. In Treasure Island, you'll find the most gay-identified of the region's beaches, the so-called "Bedrocks Beach." It's a little tricky to find – when you cross the bridge from St. Pete Beach onto Treasure Island, turn left at the 7-Eleven onto West Gulf Boulevard and follow it south for a mile to the parking area just north of the Mansions by the Sea condo tower. Follow the boardwalk over the short span of dunes, and you'll typically find plenty of gays and lesbians tanning their hides along the beautiful beachfront.

Head a bit north up the coast and you'll come to the resort city of Clearwater, which has a lively, somewhat up-market beachfront separated from downtown by a picturesque harbor. And still a bit farther north is the funky little town of Dunedin, which has a charming, gay-friendly cluster of shops, boutiques and restaurants along its historic downtown Main Street.

St. Petersburg has seen an influx of notable restaurants in recent years. One of the city's classics is Marchand's Bar & Grill (http://www.marchandsbarandgrill.com), a refined venue inside the historic Renaissance Vinoy Resort – for a special occasion, this is one of the top spots in town, whether for dinner or Sunday brunch. Overlooking the marina at the foot of the pier, Fresco's Waterfront Bistro (http://site.chefjasonesposito.com) pulls in a festive happy-hour crowd, serves mouthwatering haddock po'boys, and provides lovely views of the waterfront.

A relative newcomer, Cassis (http://www.cassisab.com) serves reliably good French bistro fare in an urbane setting – choose a table on the sidewalk when the weather is nice. A few blocks north, Hooker Tea Company (http://hookertea.com) is a cheery option for gelato, pastries and toothsome breakfast fare. Drop by slick and arty Kahwa Coffee (http://www.kahwacoffee.com) for first-rate espresso, and drip coffee. Bella Brava (http://www.bellabrava.com) and Ceviche Tapas Bar (http://www.ceviche.com) are two additional downtown notables, each cultivating a fairly trendy crowd. And the see-and-be-seen Independent (http://www.independentbeer.com) attracts a stylish, arty crowd for hard-to-find imported beers, fine wines by the glass and live music.

In Gulfport, head to Habana Cafe (http://www.habanacafe-usa.com) for authentic Cuban fare (including delicious drunken shrimp with garlic and mojo sauce); and La Fogata Churrascaria (http://www.lafogataonline.com) for well-prepared seafood, steaks, tapas and elegant cocktails. MadFish (http://www.madfishonline.com) is a slick spot set inside a shimmering stainless-steel diner in St. Pete Beach – the kitchen here turns out creative contemporary fare. At nearby Wildwood BBQ & Burger (http://www.brguestrestaurants.com/restaurants/wildwood_bbq) you can feast on tasty comfort food – note the impressive list of small-batch bourbons.

Tiny downtown Dunedin has several good restaurants, including Pan y Vino (http://www.panyvino.com), for brick-oven pizzas and a nice selection of wines by the glass; and the gay-popular Mexican restaurant Casa Tina (http://www.casatinas.com).

St. Petersburg's Grand Central District has a few good restaurants, one of which, the stylish Queen's Head (http://www.thequeensheadbar.com), is also one of the city's top lgbt nightlife options. Sip cocktails in one of the outdoor cabanas or inside the slick bar and dining area, where you might enjoy a dinner of pan-roasted skate with truffle-mash carrots, beetroot-vanilla chutney and lemon oil. A few blocks away is arguably the most gay bar in the city, Georgie's Alibi (http://www.georgiesalibi.com), which pulls in a youthful, see-and-be-seen crowd.

Other good bets along the Grand Central corridor include Gemini Lounge (http://www.myspace.com/gemini_lounge), which books fun live bands; Detour, a laid-back watering hole; quirky Lucky Star Lounge (http://www.myspace.com/luckystarlounge28), which is tucked behind a liquor store; and Beak's Old Florida, an inviting tavern and grill that has a popular following with straights and gays.

You'll find a few other neighborhood bars around

continued on page 30

Pack Suitcases for Harrisburg Men's Chorus Season

Pack your suitcase and grab your passport. The Harrisburg Men's Chorus takes you on a whirlwind tour of the world via music and song as part of its 2010-2011 season. January 22, 23, 29, and 30 performances are entitled "It's a Gay World After All".

Your trip begins at home with a Native American perspective. Then it's off to Europe with stops in the United Kingdom, Scotland, Ireland, France and Germany. The journey continues with stops in the Middle East before heading down to Africa and back through the Caribbean and Mexico. And all along the way, the audience will be treated to several numbers performed by soloists and small ensembles whisking them away to Japan and even further destinations. Artistic Director David Walker has designed a program that is sure to entertain both novice and seasoned choral fans.

When & Where:

Saturday, January 22 – 8 p.m.
The Maennerchor Club
221 North Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101

Sunday, January 23 – 2 p.m.
Colonial Park United Church of Christ
5000 Devonshire Road, Harrisburg, PA 17109

Saturday, January 29 – 8 p.m.
Unitarian Church of Harrisburg
1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg, PA 17111

Sunday, January 30, – 2 p.m.
Unity Church of Harrisburg
927 Wertzville Road, Enola, PA 17025

Tickets are $5.00 general admission. Info:http://www.harrisburgmenschorus.org or 717-236-3809

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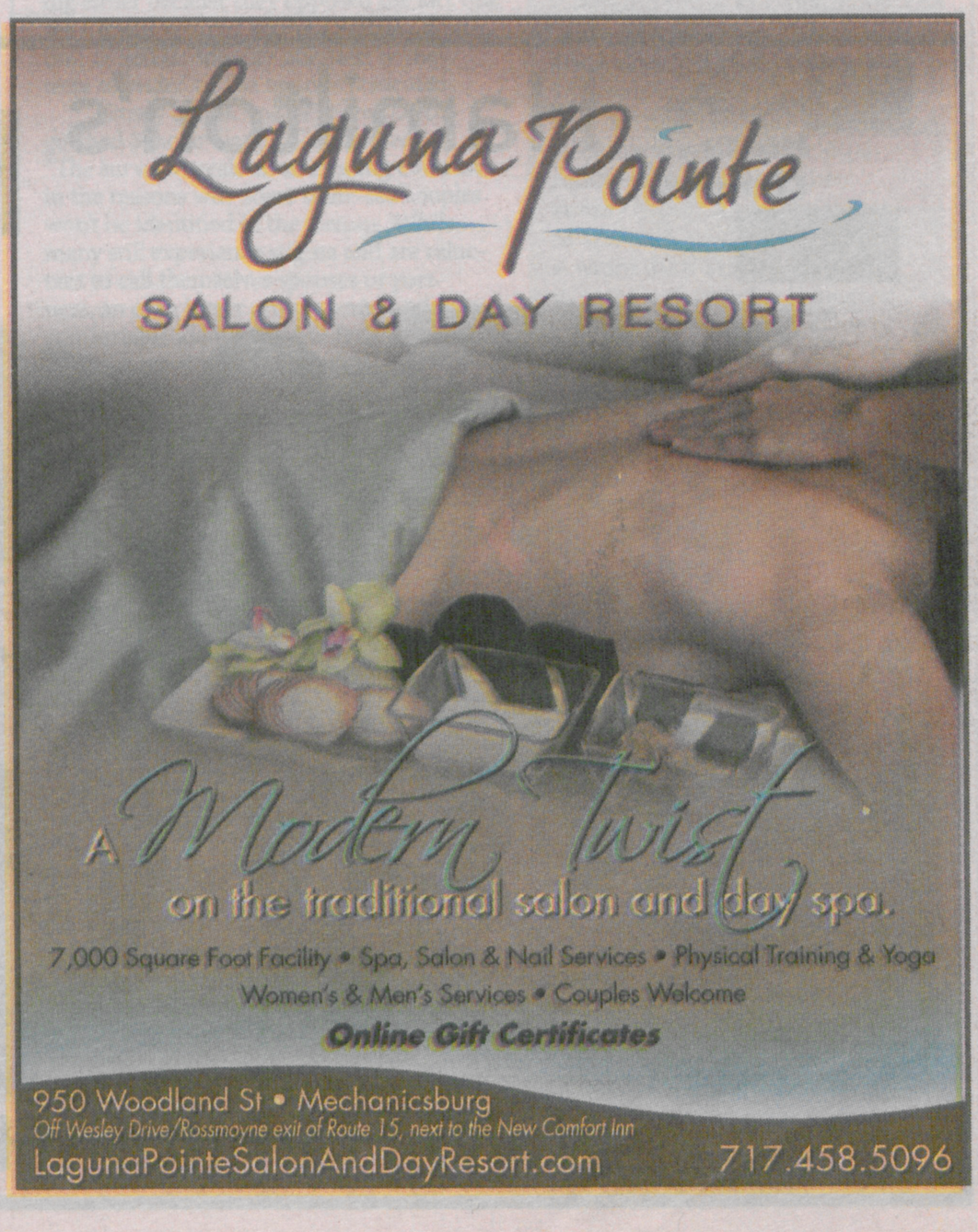

Where Are We In 2010 with HIV/AIDS in Pennsylvania

By Nicole Hamilton

More than 20 years after the HIV/AIDS epidemic in America rates of new infections are still on the rise. In Pennsylvania racial and ethnic minorities account for more than 60% of people living with HIV/AIDS but collectively account for 15% of the population. This could be attributed to people with HIV/AIDS living much longer with the availability of HAART (highly active antiretroviral therapy).

The stigma surrounding HIV seems to be a major problem when it comes to HIV testing and treatment, although many agencies offer free/confidential and even anonymous testing, many people are still afraid that just walking through the door may cause them to be "labeled" as HIV positive. Hamilton Health Center's HOPE program wants the community to take pride in "knowing their status" as early detection is a key to survival; so many people are diagnosed late stage HIV or AIDS.

Hamilton Health Center has joined forces with Hershey Medical Center and The PA Department of Health to try and decrease this stigma by making HIV testing a routine part of health care, and many people have been receptive to it. However we realize the need to still work hard to encourage people in our community to get tested and know their status. There are many people who do not seek regular health care and may be at risk and we encourage those people to come in and get tested.

While men who have sex with men account for a large percentage of newly diagnosed HIV/AIDS, heterosexual contact has become increasingly the number two rate of transmission with persons ages 20-44 being the highest risk group and those ages 44 or older as being the second highest among heterosexuals. Intravenous Drug Use (IDU) transmission represents a large risk group as well.

The PA Department of Health estimates there are a large number of persons living with HIV who are unaware of their status. In an effort to decrease this number, Hamilton Health Center has a host of programs aimed at educating the community and encouraging those who have not been tested or are at risk to come in and get tested. There are prevention programs for youth, women, and those that have been incarcerated. For more information on our programs or free/confidential or anonymous testing please call Hamilton Health Center's HOPE Program at 717-230-3949.

February 7, 2010 is National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day, encourage a friend, family member or loved one to get educated, get tested and know their status.

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Anti-bullying Effort Moves Forward

The news of recent suicides of teens who had experienced bullying and harassment based on their real or perceived lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender identities is a stark reminder that bullying is an epidemic faced by the youngest members of our community.

A working group of several community partners unleashed an anti-bullying initiative in Harrisburg School District last November. The initiative engages all members of the school community-students, faculty and staff, and parents-to educate about bullying and equip them to take action against it.

"Our students deserve to have the opportunity to learn in a safe school environment," says Rev. Monica Dawkins-Smith. She explains, "As a community, we can all take action to stop bullying."

The new initiative engages students using the arts, and gives them the venue for expressing their experiences with bullying; train faculty and staff to create safe spaces in schools, specifically attuning them to the experiences of lgbt students; and equip parents to support their children when bullying happens.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, nearly a third of all students aged 12 - 18 experience bullying over the course of a year, some almost daily. A recent report from the Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network (GLSEN) found that each year, nearly nine in 10 lgbt middle- and high-school students experience bullying based on their sexual orientation.

The initiative has been spearheaded by Rev. Monica Dawkins-Smith of Salem/Journeys United Church of Christ, and has included the efforts of representatives from the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania, the YWCA of Greater Harrisburg, Institute for Cultural Partnerships, Keystone Human Services, Life Esteem, the City of Harrisburg, Dauphin County MH/MR, Estamos Unidos de Pennsylvania, the United Way of the Capital Region, Giant Food Stores and Harrisburg School District

The aim of this anti-bullying initiative in Harrisburg School district is to create awareness of bullying and empower students, professionals, and parents to take action in preventing it.

In the wake of teen suicides, the US Dept. of Education issued a letter to 15,000 school superintendents around the nation to insure that administrators were well versed on current anti-bullying laws. The New Jersey General Assembly moved forward with a proposed revision of their 2002 anti-bullying law that would strengthen the measure.

Information: Monica Dawkins-Smith, pastor, Salem/Journeys United Church of Christ, 717.232.7145, pastor.monica.ucc@gmail.com.

Do Racial Justice and Gay Efforts Exclude One Other?

A new study on the relationship between racial justice organizations and lgbt communities finds damaging perceptions about lgbt communities and racial justice, says a report by Applied Research Center (ARC) in partnership with the Arcus Foundation.

The study, titled, "Better Together: Research Findings on the Relationship between Racial Justice Organizations and LGBT Communities," specifically notes perceptions that lgbt identity and politics are for white people and that communities of color are disproportionately homophobic.

"These myths harm lgbt communities of color and continue to be perpetuated by divisive, politically motivated platforms such as the Proposition 8 Campaign," says Rinku Sen, ARC executive.

The report is a result of surveys and interviews with more than 80 organizations and 30 key leaders, based on the premise that significant numbers of lgbt people are of color and comprising an important part of the racial justice constituency. The report focuses on current engagement efforts, perceived barriers, potential opportunities, and key recommendations for advancing work in this intersectional area.

Said Sen, "When racial justice groups, including those focused on lgbt people, take on the intersection of race and sexuality, they can build enduring political power to make the policy and practice changes that improve communities nationwide."

Primary recommendations are to increase funding and support for gay organizations of color, invest in tools for strategic clarity, support leadership development for lgbt leaders of color, and build media and communications infrastructure. "The significance of philanthropic support for racial justice engagement of lgbt issues cannot be overestimated," says Roz Lee, Arcus Foundation. "There is a critical need for general and targeted funding for lgbt organizations of color and partnership-building. Additionally, funders must support media and leadership development in order to increase visibility for the incredible work that is happening every day."

Though generally optimistic about the opportunities for more organizations to engage, the report also warns that many existing programs focused on lgbt people of color do exist but are not receiving media attention and visibility that would support expansion, much less impact public perception of the issues necessary for policy change.

1 in 7 Same-sex Couples Not Identified in Census 2010

The Williams Institute for Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy at the UCLA School of Law issued results of a survey showing that while 99% of same-sex couples participated in Census 2010, 1 in 7 same-sex couples will not be identified as such in Census 2010.

The survey also shows 30% of same-sex couples are either married (14%) or in a civil union or registered domestic partnership (15%). More than 4 in 10 of those couples in legal relationships do not live in states that recognize their marriage, civil union, or domestic partnership.

Williams Institute scholars designed the national survey conducted by Harris Interactive in June, 2010 that asked more than 600 individuals in cohabiting same-sex couples about their participation in Census 2010. The survey was designed to understand if and how same-sex couples completed their Census 2010 form and why they chose the options they did to identify their relationship.

Same-sex couples are identified in Census data when one partner is "Person 1" in a household and designates the other as a husband, wife, or an unmarried partner. The survey found that 1 in 10 individuals in same-sex couples opted to identify as roommates on their Census forms.

An additional 5% of couples are not identified because they live in a household where neither partner is Person 1.

Respondents who used terms other than spouse or unmarried partner cited three main reasons for their decision. About a third said that they just thought of their relationship in some other way, a quarter cited confidentiality concerns about disclosing their relationship, and a third were protesting either because they opposed the fact that the Census was not asking a sexual orientation or gender identity question or they were offended by the options presented.

Study author and Williams Distinguished Scholar Gary J. Gates notes that, "The survey reveals an interesting contrast in the reasons why some same-sex couples won't be identified in the Census. While many still experience stigma and are reluctant to call themselves spouses or partners, an even larger group seems perfectly comfortable identifying but feels the Census does not provide an appropriate term or even a question to identify their sexual orientation."

The survey also shows a high level of correspondence between couples' legal relationship status and their responses on the Census. While virtually all couples who were not in a legally recognized relationship called themselves unmarried partners, the census form options were more challenging for those in legal relationships.

Most married couples (80%) called themselves spouses but that figure was higher (89%) in states that recognized the marriage. Only 62% of married couples in states that did not recognize the marriage used husband or wife.

Approximately 84% of those in civil unions or registered domestic partnerships called themselves unmarried partners. A quarter of these couples who lived in states where their status was recognized called themselves spouses compared to just 12% among those who lived in states with no recognition.

Gates comments that, "Choosing unmarried partner seems obvious for couples who are not married and not in a civil union or registered domestic partnership, but the Census forms are more challenging and confusing for those who are married but live in states that do not recognize the marriage or those who are in civil unions or registered domestic partnerships. Government surveys must improve and adapt to the changing landscape of relationship recognition in this country."

The findings provide insight into how to interpret same-sex couple data from Census 2010 that will be released next year. Most couples (86%) who called themselves spouses were either married (71%) or in a civil union or registered domestic partnership (15%). Virtually all couples (99%) who used unmarried partner were either not married (96%) or were married but lived in a state that did not recognize their marriage (3%).

Other Williams Institute findings:

- **More than 9 in 10 same-sex couples completed and mailed their surveys back, a figure higher than the general population mail-back rate of 7 in 10 households.**
- **Nearly all married couples who selected unmarried partner to describe their relationship said that they did so because either the federal or state government does not recognize their marriage.**
- **Among those in civil unions or registered domestic partnerships who selected husband or wife to describe their relationship, virtually all said it was because they were in a legal relationship status or they simply thought of themselves as spouses.**
- **More than 3% of individuals in same-sex couples indicated that they were transgender or had a transgender partner. Of that group, 55% said that they were either married or in a civil union or registered domestic partnership compared to only 28% of non-transgender respondents.**

St. Petersburg's cont'd from page 26

the city, such as Haymarket Pub, a low-keyed dive bar on the north side of the city - it's next door to the Hideaway, which bills itself the longest-running lesbian bar in the United States. Gulfport gay lounges include the Oar House Bar and Pepperz Lounge, both of which are a bit down at the heels. You may have a better experience strolling along the community's main drag, Beach Boulevard, and stopping by any of the many gay-friendly bars and eateries - Peg's (http://www.pegscantina.com) is a particular standout, known for terrific hand-crafted ales with a kitchen serving fresh and well-prepared in Mexican food.

In downtown Clearwater, the convivial Pro Shop Pub (http://www.proshoppub.us) is one of the oldest gay bars in the state and has a popular following at happy hour. Just north in downtown Dunedin, the Kelly's/Blur (http://www.kellyschicaboom.com) complex comprises an LGBT-friendly nightclub, showbar, martini lounge and casual American restaurant.

St. Petersburg is home to one of the largest gay resorts in the country, the Flamingo (http://www.flamingofla.com), which in addition to being a popular LGBT nightlife venue has a large central pool, a good restaurant and 130 simply but pleasantly furnished – and reasonably priced – hotel rooms.

The city's grandest and most famous hotel is the swell-elegant Renaissance Vinoy Resort (http://www.marriott.com), which has long been a friend to the gay community. This pink palace overlooks the downtown waterfront, comprising both a historic main building, which opened in 1927, and a newer wing with roomier accommodations but a still-classic color scheme and design. Amenities include an impressive health club and spa, golf at the resort's private course a couple of miles away, and excellent dining at three different restaurants.

There are also several excellent, mid-priced chain properties downtown, including the Courtyard Marriott (http://www.marriott.com), the Hampton Inn and Suites (http://www.stpetehamptonsuites.com) and the hip, lime-hued Hotel Indigo (http://www.hotelindigo.com) – all are just a few minutes' walk from Tampa Bay and major museums. You'll also find few gay-friendly and very charming B&Bs in the Old Northeast Historic District, which flanks downtown and is a pleasant walk from shops and restaurants. Among these, the gay-owned Dickens House (http://www.dickenshouse.com) is a stunning example of Arts and Crafts architecture with plush, beautifully furnished accommodations. Also consider the Mansion House B&B (http://www.mansionbandb.com), with its glorious full-size pool; and the Beach Drive Inn (http://www.beachdriveinn.com), which is across from the famed Renaissance Vinoy Hotel.

The well-priced and popular clothing-optional GayStPete House (http://www.gaystpetehouse.com) is an excellent base for proximity to the bars and restaurants of the Grand Central District, and in Gulfport, consider the marvelous Sea Breeze Manor Bed & Breakfast (http://www.seabreezemanor.com), a historic Tudor-style 1920s house that overlooks Boca Ciega Bay and has spacious, warmly appointed rooms.

Across the bay in St. Pete Beach you'll find the area's other famous grande dame, the Loews Don Cesar Resort (http://www.loewshotels.com), an opulent, pink wedding-cake of a hotel that's hosted countless celebrities and appeared in such prominent films as Health and Once Upon a Time in America. Nearby, the circa-1957 Postcard Inn on the Beach (http://www.postcardinn.com) is a sleek, surfer-chic boutique hotel on the water that's steadily developed a gay following – book a poolside cabana room for optimum swank factor.

For easy access to Clearwater and a location in the heart of charming downtown Dunedin, look no further than the stylish Meranova Guest Inn (http://www.meranova.com), which has eight tastefully furnished rooms, each with private entrances.

Andrew Collins covers gay travel for the New York Times-owned website About.com and is the author of "Fodor's Gay Guide to the USA".

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LGBT community center coalition

GSA Leadership Summit Grows 2011

By Louis Marven

Amidst all the news this school year about the bullying of students based on their real or perceived lgbtq identities, it's important to remember that one of the best ways to build a safer school environment is active support for student-led efforts like GSAs.

Typically known as a gay-straight alliance—although some local groups are using the language of "gender and sexuality alliance" to more fully embrace the wide variety of identities and experiences in our community—a GSA is a group of lgbtq students and allies that works to create a more positive environment in a school for everyone regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. While GSAs can look many different ways, most include some sort of social, support, and educational elements.

Common Roads has long been an advocate for GSAs, and we offer technical assistance and support to the local groups in a number of ways: we provide guidance on how to start a group, we connect groups with local speakers on relevant topics, we inform advisers to high school groups about community events of interest, etc. My personal favorite part of our GSA support is the annual GSA Leadership Summit, a collaborative project we organize with Planned Parenthood of Central PA and Dickinson College's Office of Diversity Initiatives.

The GSA Leadership Summit is an opportunity for students, teachers, counselors, social workers, administrators, and community members to meet, network, and participate in workshops designed to help everyone better understand and advocate for lgbtq students in central Pennsylvania and beyond. Our fourth annual event will take place on Feb. 25 at Dickinson College (snow date: April 1).

This year's Summit will start off with a presentation from keynote speaker Peterson Toscano, a theatrical performance activist using comedy and storytelling to address social justice concerns. Toscano will give the keynote presentation on Identity, Bullying, and Building a Better School and will stick around to facilitate workshops on using technology and new media called Wired for Activism.

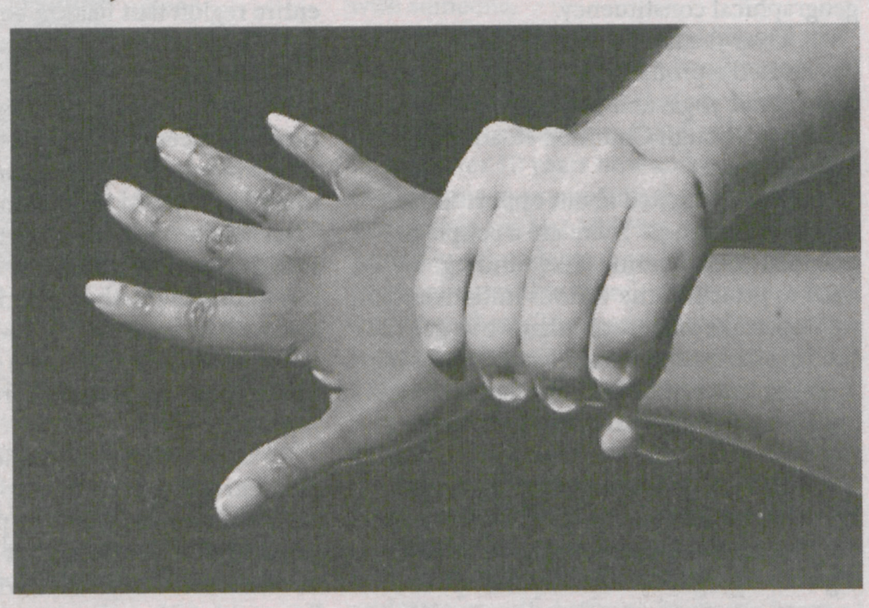
Summit attendees will be able to attend three workshops throughout the day, with time set aside over lunch for networking with students from other groups. This year's workshops touch on a broad range of subjects geared toward building skills and developing leadership; a sample of the workshops include Do We Really Need to Talk About HIV?: Strategies for Planning for HIV Awareness Events, Laws Don't Just Pass Themselves! – Creating Change in Schools and Communities, and Becoming a Sexpert: Finding and Using Sexual Health Resources.

We are excited to announce that representatives from GLSEN will be presenting a workshop this year on how students can engage in the legislative process. The organization strives to assure that each member of every school community is valued and respected regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity/expression. Their research department supports the organization's mission by conducting original research, making evaluations of programs and initiatives, and creating resources that document anti-LGBT bias in K-12 schools.

Our program also includes presenters from Central PA Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, Dickinson College, Elizabethtown College, Equality PA, HACC, Millersville University, Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape, Planned Parenthood of Central PA, Silent Witness Peacekeepers, and TransCentralPA. We are thankful to the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) for their sponsorship of the upcoming Summit.

Louie Marven is the director of education & youth services for the LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central Pennsylvania.

Hate Crimes Drop in PA, Nation



Late last year the Federal Bureau of Investigation released its annual hate crime data. Statistics show that bias crime in the nation dropped for 2009. Pennsylvania data reflects the same trend.

In the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, the victim of a hate crime may be an individual, a business, an institution, or society as a whole. For 2009, the nation's law enforcement agencies reported that there were 8,336 victims of hate crimes. Of these victims, 14 were victimized in 6 separate multiple-bias incidents.

By bias motivation

An analysis of data for victims of single-bias hate crime incidents showed that:

48.8 percent of the victims were targeted because of the offender's bias against a race.

18.9 percent were victimized because of a bias against a religious belief.

17.8 percent were targeted because of a bias against a particular sexual orientation.

13.3 percent were victimized because of a bias against an ethnicity/national origin.

1.2 percent were targeted because of a bias against a disability.

Racial bias

Among the single-bias hate crime incidents in 2009, there were 4,057 victims of racially motivated hate crimes.

71.5 percent were victims because of an offender's anti-black bias.

16.5 percent were victims because of an anti-white bias.

3.7 percent were victims because of an anti-Asian/Pacific Islander bias.

2.1 percent were victims because of an anti-American Indian/Alaskan Native bias.

6.2 percent were victims because of a bias against a group of individuals in which more than one race was represented (anti-multiple races, group).

Religious bias

Of the 1,575 victims of an anti-religious hate crime:

71.9 percent were victims because of an offender's anti-Jewish bias.

8.4 percent were victims because of an anti-Islamic bias.

3.7 percent were victims because of an anti-Catholic bias.

2.7 percent were victims because of an anti-Protestant bias.

0.7 percent were victims because of an anti-Atheist/Agnostic bias.

8.3 percent were victims because of a bias against other religions (anti-other religion).

4.3 percent were victims because of a bias against groups of individuals of varying religions (anti-multiple religions, group).

Sexual-orientation bias

Of the 1,482 victims targeted due to a sexual-orientation bias:

55.1 percent were victims because of an offender's anti-male homosexual bias.

26.4 percent were victims because of an anti-homosexual bias.

15.3 percent were victims because of an anti-female homosexual bias.

1.8 percent were victims because of an anti-bisexual bias.

1.4 percent were victims because of an anti-heterosexual bias.

Ethnicity/national origin bias

Hate crimes motivated by the offender's bias toward a particular ethnicity/national origin were directed at 1,109 victims. Of these victims:

62.4 percent were targeted because of an anti-Hispanic bias.

37.6 percent were victimized because of a bias against other ethnicities/national origins.

Disability bias

Of the 99 victims of a hate crime due to the offender's bias against a disability:

74 were targets because of an anti-mental disability bias.

25 were victims because of an anti-physical disability bias.

social organizations & recreational clubs

Gay & Lesbian Artisan Pride

Discuss topics important to today's gay artist, Mentoring and nuturing growth of "Up Coming" and amateur artists, Promote art awareness within our own community, Creating and Coordinating group shows. Please email or call with interest/Questions/ Comments.

Phone: (717)732-0233
Contact: Michael Reed
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Calls and Emails Can be made Days/ Evenings
Email: mreeddesigns@yahoo.com

Harrisburg Gay Men's & Women's Volleyball

3rd and Bridge St
New Cumberland, PA
Phone: 717.233.3172
Contact: Jim
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. - 9.30 p.m.

Baughman United Methodist Church

Harrisburg Ladies Night Out
New Cumberland. Cost: $2.50
PO Box 266
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Phone: 717.232.8382
Contact: Judy Chambers
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available

HOWL

HOWL hanging out with lesbians. Group of 140 women.
Contact: Gina Bowers-Miller
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: howlofpa@yahoo.com
Website: http://www.homestead.com/howlofpa/index.hmtl
Other web address http://groups.yahoo.com/group/howlofpa/ to join

Lambda Car Club Int'l Central PA Region

Organization of GLBT people who are interested in collectable automobiles
Contact: Robert Miller, President
1721 Logan St.
Harrisburg, PA 17102
PH: 610 496-5651
3623 Green Street
Harrisburg, PA 17110
Phone: 717.238.9766
Contact: John Ball
Wheelchair Accessible: no
Hours: Meet monthly at different members houses, call for info
Email: buickbum2@aol.com

Rainbow Pride Rural Project

This project intends to create support for the GLBT community living in rural York, Juniata, Mifflin and Perry Counties. It is funded by the Foundation for Enhancing Communities and housed within Metropolitan Community Church of the Spirit located in uptown Harrisburg, Pa.
2973 Jefferson St.
Harrisburg, Pa. 17110-2127
Phone: 717-236-7387
Contact: Kevin E. Burrell
Wheelchair Accessible: Yes
Email: kevinb2004@msn.com

Students Advocating LGBTA Equality

Shippensburg University Cumberland Union Building
Box 89
Shippensburg, Pa 17265
Phone: 717-477-1616
Contact: Travis Eichelberger
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: susale@gmail.com
Website: www.ship.edu/~msa/SALE.htm

Susquehanna Club

Group camping open to LGBT people and their friends.
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: camp@susq.org
Website: www.susq.org

Susquehanna Valley Bears

PO Box 11, Manchester, PA 17345
Contact: Matt S.
Wheelchair Accessible: No Info Available
Email: daddyscub@comcast.net
Website: www.svbears.com

The Pennsmen, Inc

The Pennsmen, Inc are Central PA's glbt leather/levi/kink social organization. Membership is open to anyone over the age of 21 with an interest in the lifestyle. Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at the Neptune Lounge @ 3:00pm
PO Box 401
HARRISBURG, PA 17108-0401
Phone: 717-232-3785
Contact: Steven James
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Evenings
Email: pennsmen@pennsmen.org
Website: www.pennsmen.org

The Rainbow Bowling League

The Rainbow Bowling League bowls every Thursday at 8:55 p.m. We bowl out of the ABC East Lanes on Eisenhower Blvd in Harrisburg and are considered a "mixed" league: in other words, both men and women are welcome. We would like to invite anyone interested in joining or you have friends that are interested in bowling on Thursday evenings. Call for more details. Openings for individual bowlers, teams and substitutes.
Phone: 763-8444
Contact: Mark or Robert
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Hours: Thursday 8:45 P.M.

Women's Circle

c/o Bobbi Carmitchell
Locust Lane Music, P.O. Box 8301
Lancaster, Pa 17604
Phone: 717.872.4512
Contact: Bobbi Carmitchell
Wheelchair Accessible: No information available
Email: bobbi@womenscircle.org
Website: www.womenscircle.org

Building Alliances

Continued from page one

nice to come back home." Rose has family in central New York, friends in Philadelphia and Washington, DC. "My involvement with various efforts here in Harrisburg over the past couple of years has all made it a much easier transition for me. I'm thrilled to be here," she says.

Community members and organizations can help the center.

Rose stresses communication. "My door is always open and I need people to be open and honest about what they need and want. A key concept in my vernacular is 'relevant'. The challenge is to provide programs and services that are relevant in people's lives." Rose invites input and involvement from the community "so we can prioritize and plan accordingly."

Building alliances with groups already established is important.

"We'll all be more effective as a group of groups rather than as individual entities. Finding overlaps and opportunities for alignments helps everyone to be more successful at our missions," Rose said. "I can't stress strongly enough about how important it is to get involved. This is your community center and will only be as active and vibrant as the people who participate, volunteer, and attend events."

What about the idea of a community center for an eight-county region?

Many traditional community centers are localized to a specific city or locality. "In contrast, our constituency here covers almost 2 million people spread over a diverse eight country area," Rose acknowledges. "This provides several challenges. One is simply about raising awareness that the organization even exists and the programming that we offer. Even more challenging are the logistical obstacles of identifying ways to then bring that programming to the far corners of our service area," she notes.

Rose envisions the center is just that – a center. "But our engagement model will be more like the spokes of a wheel where we make sure to go out to the areas that we serve rather than expect that they will simply come to us." She explains that the center is home base and "there will certainly be times when we'll need to use it as an anchor but our goal is to have an active, visible presence in each of the counties we serve." In order to do that, Rose hopes to find leaders willing to step up with help. "That gets us back to that word again – being 'relevant,'" she said. Rose imagines a center that reaches outside our region to be a model of best practices for other centers around the country with a similarly broad cultural and geographical constituency.

Over the last 18 months, the center has created a profile with programs like book clubs, yoga, and youth programs continue through Common Roads affiliated with the center.

Rose is excited about opportunities for programming. "There are a couple of practical considerations like funding. We need to prioritize the various initiatives that we undertake and ensure that we've got the funding streams in place." Next is planning. "Getting input from the community, building a practical approach, and getting the word out is critical," she stresses.

The center is already talking about Women's Initiatives and LGBT Aging as programmatic themes for 2011. "I'm looking at bringing local and national speakers to town as part of a speaker program. We're looking to feature local and national movies that are both timely and topical as part of an ongoing film festival," Rose said. One of the first films she wants to schedule is Gen Silent, a powerful film about lgbt aging.

The center is also looking to broaden their social programming and networking. "I'd like to see regular get-togethers in York, Lancaster, and Harrisburg and across the entire region that feature both networking opportunities as well as speakers on topics of interest."

At the same time, Rose wants to expand successful programs. The center's youth-oriented Common Roads programming has enjoyed tremendous growth. "The recent epidemic of teen bullying and suicide has highlighted just how important it is to provide both outreach and support and we'll be looking to grow there as well. We've got a book club that's growing. I'd like to see a monthly concert series, as well." Rose said

The center coalition hopes to outgrow their current space sometime during the next year and move into a space that allows growth but that can also act as a "center" for the community. "That will be a goal," Rose said. Although not as easy as her slight of hand candy trick, Rose is poised to be successful.

Contact: Donna Rose, 717-920-9534, drose@centralpalgbtcenter.org.

LGBT Health

Contd from pg one

the community to determine what the future of ACA should include.

"We asked ourselves and others if the agency should continue to focus exclusively on HIV in the region," Goropoulos said. The group also asked itself and stakeholders if ACA should expand and use existing skills to address other challenges facing the region. In a time of uncertainty for nonprofits everywhere, the agency decided to expand its mission by adding new services that have long been sought after but never before put into place.

"Our planning process identified two underserved service areas, primary medical care and mental health counseling services for the lgbt community," Goropoulos said. The development of services and programming will be guided by this health-access disparity.

All services (STD, HIV, primary care, mental health) are available regardless of insurance status and ability to pay. There will be a sliding fee scale in place. In addition to the office-based STD/HIV testing, the agency currently provides mobile STD/HIV testing at various venues throughout the community for which there is no charge.

LGBT mental health counseling services are available starting January 2011.

Free STD screenings and treatment and primary health services are scheduled to open in the summer of 2011. Before the name change, Alder had been providing field-based STD testing since July 2010 when it offered the service at Central Pa Pride Festival. Plans include offering an STD clinic in the summer.

"Certainly there are many doctors in the region who treat lgbt patients with the same respect as other patients," Goropoulos said. He said ACA's approach will be to "brand and make visible" an lgbt primary health care service. "How does an individual know which doctor is welcoming, who is comfortable talking about same-sex health issues?"

As ramp up to new lgbt primary health care services, the agency has partnered with John Goldman, MD, Pinnacle Health Systems, and Lorraine Bock, MSN, CRNP, Bock Family Healthcare. For years ACA has partnered with Pinnacle Health System's REACCH Clinic, an HIV clinic based in Harrisburg, where Goldman is a lead physician. He will serve as ACA's medical director.

Bock joins the agency as primary nurse practitioner, responsible for overseeing field-based STD screening and treatment programs, assisting with immunization programs as well as the new lgbt primary health center scheduled to open in the fall of 2011.

During the last half of 2010 and early in 2011, Alder Health Services sponsored community-based health education events on lgbt health in general and gay, lesbian, transgender health disparities in particular.

Plans are for the health education series to be on-going for 2011. The next session is in late January addressing Gay Men's Health Challenges. Sessions will be hosted every other month at locations throughout the community.

Contact: Phil Goropoulos, CEO, Alder Health Services & AIDS Community Alliance, 100 N. Cameron St., Ste. 301-East, Harrisburg, Pa, 17101-2412; 717-233-7190; 1-800-867-1550; phil@aca-pa.com; www.alderhealth.org

Whitaker Center Names Murchie Board Chair

The Board of Directors of Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts recently elected Michael S. Murchie as its new chair. He succeeds Jack M. Stover, who has served as chair for the past two years.

Whitaker Center's success is a living legacy to the leadership of those individuals who have served as chair of the Board of Directors," said Michael Hanes, Ph.D., Whitaker Center President & CEO. "Most recently, Jack Stover provided wise and steady guidance as Board Chair during the very challenging economic times of the past two years. Whitaker Center is stronger and more vibrant today as a result of his leadership. We look forward to working with our new Board Chair Mike Murchie, who has been one of our most engaged and supportive Board members in recent years."

Murchie is regional president for M&T Bank, where he leads community banking teams in Dauphin, Cumberland, Franklin, and Blair counties. Additionally, he oversees community banking operations in northeastern Pennsylvania.

He began his banking career with M&T Bank in Buffalo, N.Y. in 1991 as a commercial real estate lender. He relocated to Portland, Ore. in 1996 to launch M&T Bank's commercial real estate operation in the Pacific Northwest. While in Oregon, he became a founding member of the Portland Affordable Housing Trust.

In 2001, Murchie relocated to Harrisburg to lead M&T Bank's commercial real estate lending in Pennsylvania. A year later, he was promoted to regional president.

Murchie received an MBA with a concentration in Finance from the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School of Business.

"The Whitaker Center is a jewel of educational and cultural opportunities for the region. I'm pleased to continue my support of the center in this new position," said Murchie.

Queen cont'd from page 14

In fact, you've been called a drag queen.

All the time. Constantly. They wish! (Laughs)

Tell me what you have in store for those going to see you on the "All Hearts" tour with Robyn.

Honestly, I really don't know yet. I'm kind of a – I don't want to say spontaneous, but I'm really a last-minute kind of person. I have an overview, but I don't exactly know what I'm going to do yet.

It seems like a perfect collaborative tour because both of you recently released dance albums. How familiar are you with each other?

I mean, we know each other. I wouldn't say we're like long-last sisters yet, but you never know. I think being on tour is going to be a really great thing. She's great. I love her music and I love her style. So, we've talked … and I like her (laughs).

You never know, maybe we will become long-lost sisters, but as of right now, we're cool and we're both artists and we appreciate what we do. It's exciting to be able to go out there and share that moment with someone.

Other interviews have mentioned that younger artists like Rihanna emulate you.

I've never brought that up. People ask me and so my answer is that I've been doing this for over 10 years now and the reality is that if someone came into the music business within the last 10 years, and they're probably a decade younger than me, it's pretty obvious that there's going to be some influence there. The reason people ask me is because they obviously see something. I never, ever out of my own volition bring it up, because I don't even care enough to bring it up.

Whom were you emulating then when you first launched your career?

From my youngest years, my mom was such a lady, so for me now, that's how I maintain myself. As far as artists go, I was a sponge, and I grew up with just jazz and gospel around me all the time. Then, as I got a little bit older, I started listening to anything from En Vogue to Nirvana.

What's the most random fact about you that no one else knows?

Everything about me, everyone around me knows it (laughs).

Courtney's Next Act

By Max Jiminez

Idol alumni and gender-bending sensation Courtney Act releases her new single, Welcome to Disgraceland, this week.

Act made a named for herself in 2003, when after trying out and failing to get on Australian Idol as Shane Jenek, she returned for the next day's audition as Courtney Act. Courtney's explosive, energetic performing style and joyous personality resonated with audiences. With performances of songs like "You Don't Own Me", "W.O.M.A.N." and "You Shook Me All Night Long", the country was mesmerized and Australia had a new, slightly less conventional, sweetheart.

Act's new single, "Welcome to Disgraceland", was inspired by her live show at Disgraceland, a popular Australia nightclub renowned for its elaborate costumes, colorful dancers, and over-the-top fabulousness. Some of the biggest names in the world have attended Disgraceland including George Michael and the Pussycat Dolls.

"No matter where I am when I sing the song's chorus, the audience and I are magically transported to Disgraceland," she continues. "It's euphoric to see everyone in the arena jumping, dancing, laughing and celebrating the debauchery!"

Most recently, Courtney made international headlines when she performed a private birthday performance for Lady Gaga. "After the performance, we chatted and walked together in a garden. At one point, we reached some stone steps that looked dangerous," she remembers. "Gaga suggested we take off our heels since they were both 6". Mine, however, were not Armani Privé and Swarovski encrusted."

Even so, Act says she was struck by how normal Lady Gaga was. "Our similarities were greater than our differences," she says. Act hopes audiences gleam the same realization from her show.

In addition to being the first drag contestant on "Idol", Courtney Act was the franchises' first out contestant. No other contestant on any Idol show throughout the world has ever been out during production. Still, Courtney doesn't credit the dress for her success.

"I was judged on my entertainment value and talent, two essential qualities for any pop artist," she says. "I know the fact that I was in drag added to the entertainment value, but I think the whole package is what got me through."

Idol has led to many new opportunities for the drag star, including a make-up contract as one of the TV faces of Sheer Cover Make-up, a role in the Australian company of the musical RENT, and numerous TV show appearances including Australia's Next Top Model. In 2007, she was selected by FHM Magazine readers as one of FHM's Top 100 Sexiest Women in the World.

For more information, visit www.courtneyact.com.

Medicare Allows Same-sex Visitation Rights

Following the 2007 death of Lisa Pond at Miami's Jackson Memorial Hospital, President Barack Obama last April ordered Health and Human Services to craft rules that would allow same-sex domestic partners full visitation rights at hospitals. Obama ordered the new rules after Pond's life partner, Janice Langbehn, was denied visitation just before her death.

Late last year, HHS announced the new rules.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) new rules for Medicare and Medicaid-participating hospitals protect patients' right to choose their own visitors during a hospital stay, including a visitor who is a same-sex domestic partner.

"Basic human rights - such as your ability to choose your own support system in a time of need - must not be checked at the door of America's hospitals," said HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius.

"Today's rules help give 'full and equal' rights to all of us to choose whom we want by our bedside when we are sick, and override any objection by a hospital or staffer who may disagree with us for any non-clinical reason."

The rules require hospitals to have written policies and procedures detailing patients' visitation rights, as well as the circumstances under which the hospitals may restrict patient access to visitors based on reasonable clinical needs.

A key provision of the rules specifies that all visitors chosen by the patient (or his or her representative) must be able to enjoy "full and equal" visitation privileges consistent with the wishes of the patient (or his or her representative).

Among other things, the rules impose new requirements on hospitals to explain to all patients their right to choose who may visit them during their inpatient stay, regardless of whether the visitor is a family member, a spouse, a domestic partner (including a same-sex domestic partner), or other type of visitor, as well as their right to withdraw such consent to visitation at any time.

"These rules put non-clinical decisions about who can visit a patient out of the hands of those who deliver care and into the hands of those who receive it," said CMS Administrator Donald Berwick, MD, MPP. "While we still have miles to go in making care more patient-centered, these rules make it easier for hospitals to deliver on some of the fundamental tenets of patient-centered care—care that recognizes and respects the patient as an individual with unique needs, who treated with dignity and granted the power of informed choice."

CMS finalized the rules based on thousands of comments from patient advocates, the hospital community, and other stakeholders. The rules will be effective 60 days after official publication.

REVIEWS | *BOOKS DVDs CDs*

CYNDI LAUPER
With Memphis Blues iconic performer re-invents herself on new album featuring B.B. King, Jonny Lang, Allen Toussaint and many others.

SARAH MCLANCHLAN
Sarah McLachlan's brand new album "Laws of Illusion" is her first album of brand new material in seven years. The debut single "Loving You Is Easy" is available now at all digital providers.

CHERRYTREE RECORDS
Who spins the action? Cherrytree Records hits a musical grand slam! The label scored the top 4 albums on Billboard's Dance/Electronic chart: Lady Gaga's triple platinum The Fame, platinum 2010 The Fame Monster EP; Robyn's recently issued Body Talk Pt. 1 EP; and La Roux's 2009 self-titled debut album for Cherrytree.

CHERRYTREE RECORDS

MAROON 5
GRAMMY winning recording artist Maroon 5 is back with their highly anticipated third studio album, Hands All Over (A&M/Octone). Produced by rock studio legend Robert John "Mutt" Lange (AC/DC, Def Leppard, The Cars), Hands All Over is a killer hybrid of rock, pop, funk and R&B.

SARA BAREILLIES
Sara Bareilles releases "King Of Anything," the highly anticipated first single off her sophomore album Kaleidoscope Heart. Produced by the renowned Neal Avron. The immensely addictive and charismatic pop driven track featuring Sara's extraordinary vocal prowess is now available.

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Book Review: Wilton Manors Mystery Thriller

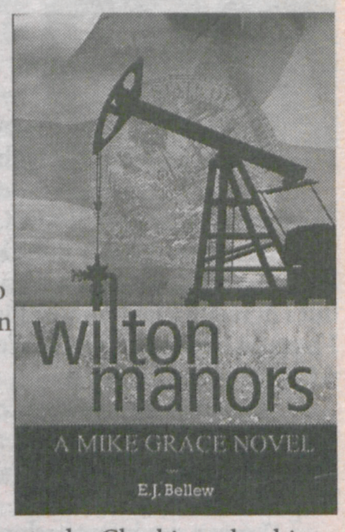
By Todd Rutherford

The progressive island-city of Wilton Manors provides the backdrop to author E. J. Bellew's first foray into fiction entitles "Wilton Manors". It is a story that can't help but remind most Florida residents of the fraud perpetrated by Scott Rothstein in recent years. "Wilton Manors" explores the backroom political dealings of the Sunshine State in a well-researched and informative look into energy concerns in the Everglades.

Following the suicide of realtor and famed drag queen, Vincent Masonius, we are introduced to Mike Grace. Grace, a gay single parent, former NYPD detective, and present bar stool warmer, is thrust into the shady world of state politics and Russian oil oligarchs, a world where the stakes are too high to make mistakes.

Bellew, who has worked as an energy company project manager for over thirty years, is a perfect guide through the science behind the Everglades' huge, yet for the most part untapped, resources.

Grace's quarry in this Hiassenesque trip through Florida's underbelly and underground resources is Harris Cherkis, a political advisor, and if not a redundancy, corrupt lawyer. Using his influence, evil, and guile, Cherkis looks to blackmail Governor Duffy in a move to gain access for his Russian bosses to untapped billions in the protected Everglades. While oil and gas are certainly the focus of the book, it reads like recent Florida headlines. Not to compare Governor Duffy and Cherkis to Scott Rothstein and Governor Charlie Crist would be the acme of folly. In Rothstein's defense, not the easiest thing to do, Cherkis makes him look like a boy scout.



Grace is a great lead, and we're sure by the end of "Wilton Manors" that we will see more of this imaginative protagonist in the future. Bellew's first novel is a suspenseful treat written from a well-informed and believable place. Read and enjoy.

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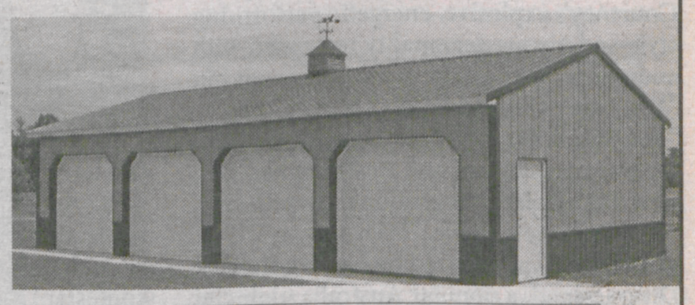
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Family Leave Act Applies

The U.S. Department of Labor has ruled that the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) will allow an employee to take unpaid leave to care for the children of the employee's same-sex partner, even when the employee hasn't legally adopted those children.

Estimates says that as many as 100,000 children in 50,000 families will now have access to a second parent's time to care for them as a result of the ruling. However, the ruling does not change the fact that an employee cannot now take unpaid leave under the FMLA to care for an ill same-sex partner.

The report notes that revising the federal law to allow employees to take unpaid leave to care for their same-sex partners would affect 215,000 families. Approximately 430,000 individuals would gain the ability to provide greater levels of care for their same-sex partners. The report uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey and the Bureau of Labor Statistics to calculate the numbers of families affected.

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